



How to make a human

animals & violence
in the middle ages



KARL STEEL

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Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Culture
Ethan Knapp, Series Editor

HOW TO MAKE A HUMAN

*Animals and Violence in the
Middle Ages*



KARL STEEL



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For Alison

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INTRODUCTION



HUMAN LIMITS

For anyone who doubts that a horse is by its very nature better than wood, and that a human being is more excellent than a horse, should not even be called a human being.

—Anselm, *Monologion*

Lest he eat grass like an ox, he has subjected the ox to himself.

—William of St. Thierry, *Physics of the Human Body*¹

The twelfth-century English monk Adam of Eynsham envisioned an after-life in which King Henry II was made to ride an infernal horse while wearing white-hot armor, his bowels pierced through by the nails of his saddle, while “cruel tormentours, wykyd fyndis, ful gretly with derisions and scornys vpbraydyd him”² (cruel tormentors and wicked fiends reproached him greatly with derision and scorn). No wonder: Henry had broken a crusade vow and encouraged the assassination of Thomas Becket. Henry could have been made to suffer for either of these sins, but Adam chose to condemn him for acts that would seem to be well within his royal prerogatives, namely the “sin” of executing poachers. Adam’s outrage is far from unusual. Like the other twelfth-century clerical opponents of poaching laws, Adam reasoned that because humans alone are made in the image of God, “by the

1. Epigraphs from, respectively, Anselm, *Monologion and Proslogion with the Replies of Gaunilo and Anselm*, trans. Thomas Williams (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1995), 4; Bernard McGinn, ed., *Three Treatises on Man: A Cistercian Anthropology* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1977), 2.71.

2. Adam of Eynsham, *The Revelation of the Monk of Eynsham*, ed. Robert Easting, EETS o. s. 318 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 123. Throughout, if the footnote marker falls immediately after the Latin, Middle English, or Old French quotation, the translation is my own.

law of kinde” (by natural law) animals of the forest “ought to be slayne to euery man”³ (should be slayable for every man); therefore anyone who executed a poacher apparently valued animal life as much as or more than human life. Henry’s crime was therefore not against humans, nor against God, but against the human itself, for, as Adam’s contemporary William of Newburgh complained, Henry treated “cervicidas” (deer killers) no differently than he did “homicidas”⁴ (man killers): what but postmortem torment could expiate so abhorrent an offense?

Adam considers the human domination of animals only incidentally: he sees no need to prove a point that is, to him, self-evident. Rather, he wielded this most natural of orders to resist royal encroachments on monastic privileges.⁵ Likewise, through animal comparisons, elites justified their exploitation of peasants, Christians encouraged and condoned antisemitic degradation and murder, and conquerors consolidated their dominion over their new subjects.⁶ The shifting boundaries of medieval class, religious, and

3. Ibid., 122. The fifteenth-century translation follows the twelfth-century original closely. In Adam’s Latin, which Easting provides on the facing page, “de iure naturali communiter omnibus [irrational beasts] cedere deberent.”

4. William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum anglicarum*, ed. Richard Howlett (London: Longman, 1884), I.3, 30. For other complaints, see John of Salisbury, *Frivolities of Courtiers and Footprints of Philosophers . . . Policraticus*, trans. Joseph B. Pike (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1938), 23; Garnier of Pont-Sainte-Maxence, quoted in A. Queffelec, “Représentation de la chasse chez les chroniqueurs Anglo-Normands du douzième siècle,” in *La Chasse au Moyen Âge: Actes du Colloque du Nice (22–24 June, 1979)* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1980), 429; Nigel de Longchamps, *Speculum Stultorum*, ed. John H. Mozley and Robert R. Raymo (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1960), lines 2563–70; and Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium, Courtiers’ Trifles*, ed. and trans. M. R. James; revised ed., C. N. L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 467. For an earlier complaint, against William I, see Michael James Swanton, ed. and trans., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 221. For further discussion of complaints against the forest law and royal hunting, see William Perry Marvin, *Hunting Law and Ritual in Medieval English Literature* (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2006), 48–54 and 63–67.

5. To encourage other rulers to treat monks well, Adam observes that Henry’s sufferings are somewhat relieved by the prayers of the “religious men” to whom “in his life for God he was full benyuolent of tyn-tymes” (205). For more on Henry’s relationship with monks, see W. L. Warren, *Henry II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 394. For a recent treatment of monks’ use of animal narrative to advocate for their privileges, see Dominic Alexander, *Saints and Animals in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008).

6. Paul H. Freedman, *Images of the Medieval Peasant* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 138–46; in terms typical of medieval antisemitism, the twelfth-century Cluniac Peter the Venerable wrote, “Lest I lie, I dare not profess that you [i.e., the Jews] are human, because I understand that the rational faculty which distinguishes the human being from other animals and beasts and renders him superior has been obliterated or suppressed in you” (quoted in Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999], 259); for more on antisemitic animal comparisons, see Elliot Horowitz, “Circumcised Dogs from Matthew to Marlowe,”

ethnic prejudices, among others, and the mechanisms of their perpetuation have deservedly been much studied, yet the prejudice of “natural” human ascendancy over other animals, according to which Henry’s execution of poachers is necessarily outrageous and any “animalization” of humans opens them to atrocity, has received sustained attention only over the last decade in the rapidly growing field of critical animal theory.⁷ Critical animal theory can be characterized by its ethical concerns and renewal of posthumanist philosophy. Its ethical stance derives from critiques of the animal liberation movement’s persistent anthropocentrism. Per these critiques, thinkers such as Peter Singer and Tom Regan undermine their own goals by measuring animals against idealized human capabilities to determine which creatures merit consideration as ethical subjects.⁸ Critical animal theory counters this ethical provincialism by advocating for nonanthropocentric approaches to

Prooftexts 27 (2007): 531–45; and for further comparisons, including, as well, Jewish and Muslim animal insults against each other and Christians, see Alexandra Cuffel, *Gendering Disgust in Medieval Religious Polemic* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 198–239. For conquerors, see Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Hybridity, Identity, and Monstrosity in Medieval Britain: On Difficult Middles* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 40, 86–89, and 91–93.

7. Key texts in the field include the anthologies of Jennifer Ham and Matthew Senior, eds., *Animal Acts: Configuring the Human in Western History* (New York: Routledge, 1997); H. Peter Steeves, ed., *Animal Others: On Ethics, Ontology, and Animal Life* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999); Nigel Rothfels, ed., *Representing Animals* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); Cary Wolfe, ed., *Zoontologies: The Question of the Animal* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003); Mary Sanders Pollock and Catherine Rainwater, eds., *Figuring Animals: Essays on Animal Images in Art, Literature, Philosophy, and Popular Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Animal Studies Group, *Killing Animals* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Josephine Donovan and Carol J. Adams, eds., *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics: A Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); the literary and cultural studies work of Cary Wolfe, *Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Erica Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality, and Humanity in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006); and Carrie Rohman, *Stalking the Subject: Modernism and the Animal* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009). The field’s central philosophical approaches have been articulated by Matthew Calarco, *Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Jacques Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008); Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Kelly Oliver, *Animal Lessons: How They Teach Us to Be Human* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); and most recently by Cary Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 99–126.

8. For example, Wolfe, *Animal Rites*, 53, observes that so far as animal rights thinkers are concerned, “the animal other matters only insofar as it mirrors . . . the *human* form that is the ‘source’ of recognizing animals as bodies that have sensations, feel pain, and so on” (original emphasis).

determining the moral significance of animals: it reconceives the distinct subjects of animal rights thinking by describing humans and nonhumans as co-constituted by their shared worlds, and in place of rationalist patterns of rights, critical animal theory proposes affective nonprogrammatic relations of caring, protection, and humility.

Critical animal theory is also yet another assault on the integrity of the “liberal humanist subject.”⁹ Such assaults are commonplace in postmodern philosophy, which variously argues that the autonomous, self-willed subject is fraud, that it comes to be not through its own efforts, but through a secondary and ongoing relation to language, to the world, or to the infinite demands of the other. Critical animal theory argues that this philosophy has failed its own critical imperative by preserving the division between humans and all other animals and thus by preserving the subject even as it purports to critique it.¹⁰ Critical animal theory stresses that the categories “human” and “animal,” as well as the assumption of any absolute limit between human and animals, must be radically rethought; it argues, furthermore, that the category “human” is best understood by examining its dependent relation on the category “animal.” The standard lines of critique function exemplarily in Derrida’s critique of Lacan. Lacan (or, as Derrida emphasizes, the Lacan of the *Écrits*) argues that animals’ inability to ascend to the symbolic frees them from the constitutive imperfection of the mental order of human subjects: unlike humans, animals “lack the lack.”¹¹ The freedom from this particular imperfection is, however, their only freedom, since Lacan traps animals in mere reaction while granting humans the flexibility of response. On this point, Lacan joins any number of other humanists, who, with as unjustified and unconsidered a confidence, deny animals an ethical life, moral significance, or moral protection by relegating them to the realm of mere instinct. Derrida’s critique of Lacan’s humanism characteristically collapses the facile distinction between reaction and response, remarking, for example, that the “logic of repetition” in the unconscious means that humans are, like animals, always instinctual, therefore never entirely autonomous, and therefore always to a certain degree reactive.¹² Derrida does not

9. For the “liberal humanist subject,” see, for example, N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 85–86.

10. See, for example, Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism*, 122–26, particularly its mapping of philosophers on a four-section grid charting their relative posthumanism and humanism: Derrida, for example, advocates posthumanist posthumanism; Rawls humanist humanism; Regan humanist posthumanism; and Rorty posthumanist humanism.

11. Derrida, *Animal that Therefore*, 137.

12. *Ibid.*, 125.

require the effacement of all distinctions between humans and nonhumans, but rather a “limitrophic” investigation, a study of “what abuts onto limits but also what feeds, is fed, is cared for, raised, and trained, what is cultivated on the edges of a limit.”¹³ Why “the animal”? What does this category accomplish? At the very least, a limitrophic investigation requires closer attention to the problematic of “response”—a concern of the last decade or so of Derrida’s career—and thus to the possibilities of responsibility, ethical and otherwise, whether in the so-called human or so-called animal. Lacan himself requires renewing or rescuing rather than abandonment. His thought on the fundamental misrecognition of self-identification, for example, lends itself to critical animal theory, if the human subject’s distinction of itself from nonhuman animals is understood as a product of the dynamics of the imaginary. Humans attempt to form themselves as human by (mis)recognizing themselves as “not animal,” and then by subjecting themselves to the impossible demands of living up to this ideal self,¹⁴ one distinctively rational, ensouled, responsible, linguistic, and so on.¹⁵ Faced with a constitutive and irreparable disparity between themselves and their human self-image, humans assert that animals lack what uniquely afflicts humans. To give this assertion strength, they treat animals “like animals,” as instruments available for labor or slaughter, violence which does not count as morally significant violence and which therefore qualitatively differs from the violence humans suffer. To a degree, this compensatory violence, this book’s very subject, covers the gap between the subject and its human self-image; but only to a degree. In my book’s closing, I will advocate not for an abandonment of some kind of structuring fantasy of self—such an abandonment, I agree, would be impossible—but rather for a less violent, less *anxiously* uncertain way of being in a world of other beings that may be recognized in turn as themselves being uncertain. Recognizing themselves anew, humans need not imagine themselves as singularly human, with all that implies, at the expense of what they understand as merely animal.

Heidegger has been as easy a target as Lacan for critical animal theory, but, just as reluctantly, he opens an approach for critically reappraising the human distinction from animals.¹⁶ Against conceptions of the human as an

13. Ibid., 29, which plays on the Greek *trophe*, “nourishment” or “nutrition.”

14. “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience,” in Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), 3–9.

15. Derrida, *Animal that Therefore*, 5, “The list of ‘what is proper to man’ always forms a configuration, from the first moment. For that reason, it can never be limited to a single trait and it is never closed.” For more on Lacan and animals, see Oliver, *Animals Lessons*, 175–89.

16. Treatments of Heidegger on animals to which the following discussion is indebted

animal supplemented or transformed by additional qualities—reason or politics, for example—Heidegger asserts that the philosophical tradition has not been sufficiently humanist; humans are not extraordinary animals, for humans and animals are utterly incomparable. The assertion is not a complete loss: although Heidegger reaffirms the distinction of humans from animals, at the same time, by insisting that animals not be measured hierarchically against what humans can do but be understood on their own terms, he demands that animals be understood nonanthropocentrically. Heidegger himself does not fulfill the demand, as his work on animals marks taxonomic divisions that so happen to fall in just those places repeatedly articulated by traditional humanism. In the *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, Heidegger distinguishes among the worlds of stones, animals, and *dasein*, the third of which is the being for which being itself is an issue. For Heidegger, stones are in the world but do not apprehend it in any way. Animals, being *weltarm* or “poor in world,” apprehend the world they inhabit without being able to “unconceal” it, that is, to reflect on, or even to apprehend, their distinctiveness within the world. Unlike *dasein*, animals are entirely “captivated” and thus can more accurately be said to be had by their world than to have it. As Heidegger admits, animals cannot in fact properly be said to be “poor in world,” since they cannot “have” any sense of a distinct world:

The animal possesses this being-open [*Offenheit*] in its essence. Being-open in captivity is an essential possession of the animal. . . . [T]he possession of being-open is a not-having, and indeed a not-having of world, if the potentiality for revelation of beings as such does indeed belong to the world.¹⁷

include Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. Kevin Attell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 49–77; Calarco, *Zoographies*, 15–53; Jacques Derrida, “‘Eating Well,’ or The Calculation of the Subject,” in *Points: Interviews, 1974–1994*, ed. Elisabeth Weber, trans. Peter Connor and Avital Ronell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 255–87; Jacques Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, trans. Rachel Bowlby and Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 47–57; Simon Glendinning, *On Being with Others: Heidegger, Derrida, Wittgenstein* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 62–70; and Oliver, *Animal Lessons*, 193–207. Lisa Guenther and Chloë Taylor, eds., *PhaenEx 2*, Phenomenology of Animals Special Issue (2007) presents several considerations of Heidegger: Kelly Oliver, “Stopping the Anthropological Machine: Agamben with Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty,” 1–23; Josh Hayes, “Heidegger’s Fundamental Ontology and the Problem of Animal Life,” 42–60; and Brett Buchanan, “The Time of the Animal,” 61–80. David Wood crafted what may be the pithiest encapsulation of Heidegger’s persistent elevation of the human over the animal: “Heidegger’s destruction of the tradition, of ontology, is in the service of what is first a program of renewal. Later, less of a program” (“Comment ne pas manger—Deconstruction and Humanism,” in Steeves, ed., *Animal Others*, 22).

17. *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 391–92, quoted in Josh Hayes, “Hei-

Only *dasein* can reflect upon itself in its world. Through this reflection emerges a host of other capabilities unique to *dasein*, chiefly *dasein*'s awareness of the world's persistence after its death. *Dasein* confronts death by knowing that the world will go on without it. By contrast, animals, unaware of their own worldly captivation, and thus unaware of the world's existence apart from themselves, do not die but merely cease.¹⁸ Because humans are uniquely capable of ontological reflection, they alone are *dasein*. Heidegger advances his argument with the insights of the founder of ethology, Jakob von Uexküll. Uexküll described the subjective world of the tick, its *umwelt*, as limited by the means by which it sates its desires and reacts to stimuli: the tick, blind and deaf, reacts to the smell of butyric acid, liquid at the temperature of mammalian blood, and hairy skin with an undercurrent of blood vessels. This is its whole world, or, at any rate, what Uexküll was able to perceive as its whole world.¹⁹ Heidegger argues that even this description would be a misnomer, given that it is improper to speak of any animal as having *welt*, world. Yet the creature's worldless immersion in world, its (in)ability to discover the distinction between what it experiences as world and the world itself, should be the same, *mutatis mutandis*, for Uexküll's tick as it is for a human, since every creature's particular abilities (including its own ways of being aware of injuries and pleasures) constrain and shape its engagement and perception of the world:²⁰ there is no good reason

degger's Fundamental Ontology and the Problem of Animal Life," in Guenther and Taylor, *PhaenEx*, 45.

18. *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 388, "Is the death of the animal a dying or a way of coming to an end? Because captivation belongs to the essence of the animal, the animal cannot die in the sense in which dying is ascribed to human beings but can only come to an end," quoted in Brett Buchanan, "The Time of the Animal," in Guenther and Taylor, *PhaenEx*, 69. For a possible source of Heidegger's denial of death to animals, see the excerpt from Arthur Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea* in Andrew Linzey and Paul Barry Clarke, eds., *Animal Rights: A Historical Anthology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 38, where Schopenhauer writes that "the brutes do not properly speaking feel death." Anticipating much else of Heidegger's animal theory, Schopenhauer also argues that time is for animals "a mere succession of presents" and that "between the brute and the external world there is nothing, but between us and the external world there is always our thought about us."

19. Ben Wolfson, "The Open: Uexküll," *The Weblog*, <http://www.adamkotsko.com/weblog/2005/10/open-uexkll.html>, counters Agamben, *The Open*, 46–47, by explaining that "'Umwelt' is not the animal's subjective world, which we can never know, but merely what we can observe the animal to interact with."

20. John Deely, "Umwelt," *Semiotica* 134 (2001): 126, "What Uexküll uniquely realized was that the physical environment, in whatever sense it may be said to be the 'same' for all organisms . . . is not the world in which any given species as such actually lives out its life. No. Each biological life-form, by reason of its distinctive bodily constitution (its 'biological heritage,' as we may say), is suited only to certain parts and aspects of the vast physical

not to understood humans as also had by their own *umwelt*, also unable to “unconceal” their position in their world *completely*. The supposedly abyssal distinction between *dasein* and animals (or indeed, as object-oriented philosophy suggests, between *dasein*, animals, and stones)²¹ is therefore as philosophically indefensible as Lacan’s humanist distinction between response and reaction. Heidegger’s question should have been, then, whether “man, the human itself, has the ‘as such.’”²² Rather than being heard as a “reduction” of humans to animal limitations, the question might be heard as admitting animals to a differently conceived *dasein*: since humans can reflect upon the conditions of existence to a degree, why can’t animals, each in its own way? Humans and animals both might engage with their own death without ever being able to fully appropriate it to their consciousness.²³ This solution may at least allow for a fulfillment of the promise in Heidegger’s thought of a nonanthropocentric concept of animals, and for a rethinking of the clarity of the distinction between *umwelt* and *dasein*, by attending at once to the potential reflectivity and the insurmountable reflective limitations of all beings.

If humans cease to be thought of as possessing unique moral significance because of their purported sole possession of responsibility or their unique capacity for reflection, nonhuman animals would cease to be automatically available to humans as mere worldly objects available for use by their supposed betters. At the least, a newfound humility and uncertainty about nonhuman animals would vitiate the strength of the insult of “animalization.” Perhaps more than any other thinker, Lévinas provides the means to counter this violence, but his work also must first be rescued from his own profound anthropocentrism.²⁴ For Lévinas, the self comes to be through the shatter-

universe. And when this ‘suitedness to’ takes the bodily form of cognitive organs, such as are our own senses, or the often quite different sensory modalities discovered in other lifeforms, then those aspects and only those aspects of the physical environment which are proportioned to those modalities become ‘objectified,’ that is to say, made present not merely physically but cognitively as well.”

21. Graham Harman, *Prince of Networks: Bruno Latour and Metaphysics* (Prahan, Victoria: re.press, 2009).

22. Derrida, *Animal that Therefore*, 160.

23. Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism*, 83–85.

24. My discussion of Lévinas and animals is indebted to Peter Atterton, “Ethical Cynicism,” in Matthew Calarco and Peter Atterton, eds., *Animal Philosophy: Essential Readings in Continental Thought* (London: Continuum, 2004), 51–61; Calarco, *Zoographies*, 55–77; David Clark, “On Being ‘The Last Kantian in Nazi Germany’: Dwelling with Animals after Levinas,” in Ham and Senior, *Animal Acts*, 165–98; John Llewellyn, “Am I Obsessed by Bobby? (Humanism of the Other Animal),” in *Re-reading Lévinas*, ed. Robert Bernasconi and Simon Critchley (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 234–45; and H. Peter Steeves, “Lost Dog, or, Lévinas Faces the Animal,” in Pollock and Rainwater, *Figuring*

ing encounter with the other. His ethics critique the “said,” the pretension to know the entirety of the infinite, ungraspable plenitude of the other, by arguing that the reduction to certainty does violence to the other. Against this pretension and violence he promoted the openness and uncertainty of “saying,” which allows the other to be an other and not simply a narcissistic reflection. Yet he asserts repeatedly that the other must be human: in Derrida’s summation, “this subject of ethics, the face, remains first of all a fraternal and human face”²⁵; in other words, the so-called other is fundamentally familiar, not in fact foreign, and definitely not an animal. Furthermore, convinced that animals were driven by merely biological urges to survive—reactions, in essence—and thus were unable to act ethically, Lévinas asserted that humans could not ethically be “hostage” to animals. He refused to examine how the very term “animal” totalized the beings of animals, destroying their multiplicity by delivering them en masse to a human certainty that pretended to know itself as human. Critical animal theory has attended in particular to two moments in Lévinas’s work. The first is an interview in which Lévinas breathtakingly misapplies the lessons of evolution: he argues that because evolution split the human entirely from the animal, any ethical relationship between humans and animals can only imitate or suggest relationships between humans.²⁶ That belief is most evident in his autobiographical feuilleton, “The Name of a Dog, or Natural Rights,” where Lévinas recalls a stray dog named Bobby, whose affection comforted Lévinas and his fellow soldiers while they were confined in a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp. Because the prisoners had no food to spare, Bobby could hope for no material reward, and, as Matthew Calarco remarks, Bobby was in danger because he belonged neither to the prisoners nor to the Nazis; in no obvious sense could he be understood as treating the prisoners as a means to a self-interested end. Faced with a dog that risked everything to do his ethical duty, Lévinas rightly called Bobby “the last Kantian in Nazi Germany.”²⁷ In response, Lévinas might have felt himself called into being

Animals, 21–35; and in Guenther and Taylor, *PhaenEx*, *Phenomenology of Animals*, David Morris, “Faces and the Invisible of the Visible: Toward an Animal Ontology,” 124–69, and Lisa Guenther, “Le flair animal: Lévinas and the Possibility of Animal Friendship,” 216–38.

25. Derrida, *Animal that Therefore*, 106. See also *The Beast and the Sovereign*, ed. Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet, and Ginette Michaud, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 108, “So long as there is recognizability and fellow [*sic*], ethics is dormant. It is sleeping a dogmatic slumber. So long as it remains human, among men, ethics remains dogmatic, narcissistic, and not yet thinking. Not even thinking the human that it talks so much about.”

26. Calarco and Atterton, *Animal Philosophy*, 49–50.

27. Emmanuel Lévinas, *Difficult Freedom: Essays in Judaism*, trans. Séan Hand (London: The Athlone Press, 1990), 151–53. The essay also appears in Calarco and Atterton,

through an ethical relationship to this other being; he might have imagined Bobby's altruism as evidence of Bobby's own sense of infinite responsibility for Lévinas's destitution. Lévinas instead wrenches his musing back into a doctrinaire humanist groove by denying that Bobby has "the brain needed to universalize maxims and drives," which, as Derrida wryly observes, renders this supposed Kantian "anything but Kantian."²⁸ Because Lévinas then reduces Bobby to a reminder of the relations that humans ought to have towards each other, his attention to Bobby serves only as a humanizing analogy. The dog is otherwise faceless, an object—like any other animal. But Bobby's very inability to universalize his conduct could have been understood as evidence of Bobby's more authentic ethical life: if I strategically accept Lévinas's constraint of Bobby's capabilities, then I might recognize that Bobby could not have been following any pre-existent, universal ethical pattern, but was instead wholly responsible to the other in the moment of the encounter. My epilogue will return to Lévinas through Matthew Calarco's call for a "universal consideration" that "would entail being ethically attentive and open to the possibility that anything might take on a face"²⁹ and by marking points in medieval literature where moments of "universal consideration" countered an anthropocentrism as vigilant as that of Lévinas. Such moments model ways for humans to leave off the "said" of the animal and to live as more uncertain, humble, and responsible beings, less confident in the moral irrelevance of others.

This humility can be attained even without such moments simply by historicizing and thus denaturalizing the distinction of (human) subject from animal. Several scholars have remarked on the importance of Christianity in this history, with its mutually supporting doctrines of, on the one hand, the particularity of human reason, human responsibility, and ultimate human invulnerability realized in the resurrection of the body, and on the other, the relegation of the nonhuman world to everlasting nothingness in the conflagration preceding the Last Judgment.³⁰ Tracking the development of the cat-

Animal Philosophy, 47–50.

28. Derrida, *Animal that Therefore*, 114.

29. Calarco, *Zoographies*, 73.

30. For commentary on the ongoing force in contemporary attitudes towards nonhumans stemming from the Christian break with the Skeptics, see Joyce E. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 3–4; and Richard Sorabji, *Animal Minds and Human Morals: The Origins of the Western Debate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 195–207. See especially Lynn White, Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis," *Science* 155.3767 (1967): 1203–7, which counters the supposed "post-Christian" character of the modern era by arguing that Christian attitudes towards time and the environment continue their predominance; in a judgment frequently quoted, albeit without its opening clause, White asserts that "especially in its Western form, Christianity is

egories human and animal through Christian thought and practice, and the alternatives suppressed, obscured, or abandoned by its still dominant way of classifying worldly beings, impedes the transhistoricism by which traditional humanism functions, even in its most sophisticated forms. It is to discover both the fabricated character of the human subject and the dismissals of other less anthropocentric traditions through which this subject became dominant. Less important, but still necessary, is tracking this development with specific attention to the Christian Middle Ages to counteract two often repeated, albeit disharmonious assertions: that Descartes inaugurated modern attitudes of human distinctiveness from animals, and that European thought between the Skeptics and Montaigne unrelentingly considered animals to have only instrumental value to humans. Joyce Salisbury's work on animals, which argues for the shifting permeability of human-animal boundaries from the early to the later Middle Ages, has been enormously important for such projects, and is deservedly the starting point for the rare historically minded critiques of the animal/human distinction that consider the Middle Ages at all or in any detail.³¹ Her work differs from previous (and indeed some current) medievalist work on animals by considering them as living creatures sharing a world with humans, rather than as moral symbols or actors in political allegories;³² thus she focuses on human engagements with animals in law and violence rather than on bestiaries, heraldry, or fables.³³ However,

the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen" (1205), and concludes by offering the pre-Bonaventuran legacy of Francis as "a patron saint for ecologists."

31. Salisbury, *Beast Within*; "Human Beasts and Bestial Humans in the Middle Ages," in Ham and Senior, *Animal Acts*, 9–22. For appraisals of Salisbury's historical narrative, see David Salter, *Holy and Noble Beasts: Encounters with Animals in Medieval Literature* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: D. S. Brewer, 2001), particularly 5–6; and Guy Guldentops, "Albert the Great's Zoological Anthropocentrism," *Micrologus* 8 (2000): 243. When critical animal theory acknowledges the Middle Ages, it tends to do so via citations of Augustine or Aquinas, or sometimes both. Nick Fiddes, *Meat: A Natural Symbol* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 106, represents a standard approach to the Middle Ages in its claim—relying on an early work by ecofeminist Carolyn Merchant—that "In medieval days, for example, the idea of humans coexisting with a living earth was more general" (however, see Carolyn Merchant, *Radical Ecology* [New York: Routledge, 1992], 139, where she observes that the oppositional binary of human and nature [among other binaries] "originated in the philosophy of ancient Greece, [was] reinforced by Christianity in the Middle Ages, and codified by scientists of the seventeenth century").

32. Beryl Rowland, *Animals with Human Faces: A Guide to Animal Symbolism* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1973) exemplifies the earlier, allegorically focused, tradition; most recently, see the allegorical political readings in Alexander, *Saints and Animals*.

33. For another comment on the imperative of nonsymbolic historicist approaches to animals, see Laura Hobgood-Oster, *Holy Dogs and Asses: Animals in the Christian Tradition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 15, "Central to my thesis is the idea that reading animals as only and always symbol [*sic*] is escapist and serves to reinforce human superiority

her denaturalization of the human could have gone further: her suggestion that Marie de France's "sympathetic portrayal" of a werewolf evidences a twelfth-century tendency toward "more compassion for the animal part within us all"³⁴ works only if humans are understood to have discrete "animal" and "human" parts independent of the very processes Salisbury tracks. Dorothy Yamamoto followed up Salisbury with a literary examination of how peripheral, low-class, or ambiguous figures, such as amphibians, wild men and women, or even Palamon and Arcite in Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, contaminate any definitive categories of the human and animal.³⁵ Like other historicist considerations of the category of the animal, Yamamoto observes that "no single factor indisputably distinguishing us from the rest of the animal kingdom has been discovered, despite the best efforts of philosophers over the centuries,"³⁶ since humans and various nonhuman animals share the qualities that supposedly distinguish humans as a particular kind of animal, whether language, reason, tool-use, tool-making, and so on. Erica Fudge, in her survey of the operations and contradictions of pre-Cartesian rationalist traditions of distinguishing humans from animals, similarly asked, "When is a human a human, and when is an animal an animal?" and her reply, like Yamamoto's, stressed the instability of human claims to the unique possession of reason: "Such questions are probably doomed never to be answered definitively."³⁷

The very inability to settle the categories of human and animal has energized recent medievalist work in critical animal studies. To date, the most radically antifoundational historicist work on animals has been inspired by Deleuze and Guattari. By their insistence that animals, people, and things constantly, strategically recombine in unbounded becoming, animals cannot be wan, symbolic imitations of humans—as in psychoanalysis, where dream animals are epiphenomena of unconscious processes—because no secure animality, humanity, or thinghood, as such, exists; nothing can be reduced to being only with and for itself.³⁸ Jeffrey Jerome Cohen draws on this work

and dominance. Animals, as real in history and in body, can be denied reality as fully living beings because they can be relegated to the powerful but disempowering category of symbol."

34. Salisbury, "Human Beasts," 18.

35. Dorothy Yamamoto, *The Boundaries of the Human in Medieval English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); "Aquinas and Animals: Patrolling the Boundary," in Andrew Linzey and Dorothy Yamamoto, eds., *Animals on the Agenda: Questions about Animals for Theology and Ethics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 80–89.

36. *Ibid.*, 89. Original emphasis.

37. Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning*, 5.

38. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 262.

to chart how the masculine bodies of warhorse and knight and their military accessories intermingle to form the “chivalric circuit.” Cohen argues that animals, humans, and objects must be appraised together because they form temporary clusters of active being in which “no single object or body has meaning . . . without reference to the other forces, intensities, affects, and directions to which it is conjoined and within which it is always in the process of becoming something other, something new.”³⁹ More recently, Cohen has considered monstrous animal bodies: the offspring of bestiality such as the half-man, half-cow in Gerald of Wales’s *Topographia Hibernica*, and creatures of shifting gender and sexuality, such as the corpse-eating hyena of Plinian animal lore. By imagining medieval writers exploring through such creatures “spacious corporeality beyond the specious boundaries of the human,”⁴⁰ Cohen discovers in animal fantasies a way to abandon the illusion of a firm distinction between human and animal or indeed between subject and world or life and nonlife. At the least, this unbounded mobility, what Deleuze and Guattari called “becoming,” provides a purchase for a critique of the still influential medieval hierarchical conception of humans as balanced midway between angels and animals.⁴¹

Nonetheless, to ensure that an attention to becoming does not ignore the advantages and operations of the human domination of animals, the recognition of the constructedness of the categories of human and animal and life itself must be allied with a consideration of the categories’ real effects and the limitrophic operations that sustain them, namely the written and social mechanisms that aim to nullify any threat to the human subject’s pretension of coherent identity. Salisbury argues that barriers between humans and animals weakened in the later Middle Ages, but, even if they did, the only “rights” protecting animals in this period were the property rights of their owners. Aquinas exemplifies this tradition when he explains, “He that kills another’s ox, sins, not through killing the ox, but through injuring another man in his property. Wherefore this is not a species of the sin of murder but of the sin of theft or robbery.”⁴² King Henry executed poachers for the

39. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Medieval Identity Machines* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 76.

40. Cohen, *Difficult Middles*, 86–90; “Inventing with Animals in the Middle Ages,” in Barbara A. Hanawalt and Lisa J. Kiser, eds., *Engaging With Nature: Essays on the Natural World in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 2008), 55.

41. For example, Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. Marcus Dods (New York: Modern Library, 1950), XII.21, 406.

42. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Bros., 1947), 2a2ae q. 64, a. 1 ad 3, “Whether it is unlawful to kill

harm they inflicted not against animals but against human elites' control of hunting. In late medieval law, any domestic pig that ate a human was executed,⁴³ while any variety of Christianity that denied the legitimacy of eating pork risked the accusation of heresy.⁴⁴ Such acts of violence and of differential allocation of care, as I will argue throughout this book, are central to distinguishing humans from animals and indeed to creating the opposing categories of human and animal, a point made perhaps most pithily by Bertrand Russell: "we can destroy animals more easily than they can destroy us; that is the only solid basis of our claim to superiority."⁴⁵ *This*, plus the recognition of the legitimacy of the human domination of animals, is the "single factor" dividing human from animals that Dorothy Yamamoto vainly sought. The unilateral, legitimized domination of animals by humans resolves, or *attempts* to resolve, the various, shifting boundaries between humans and other worldly lives into a single line. These acts of boundary-making subjugation include the acts not only of eating, taming, and killing, but also categorizing, through which humans mark one creature as merely animal—as something that *should* be eaten, tamed, or killed, that is destined only for dust rather than for immortality—and mark another, themselves, as a life that deserves to be protected, mourned, and that should never be eaten (or, if eaten, only ceremoniously, sadly, or with the exuberance of reveling

any living thing."

43. See Esther Cohen, *The Crossroads of Justice: Law and Culture in Late Medieval France* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993), 100–33; Peter Dinzelbacher, "Animal Trials: A Multidisciplinary Approach," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 33 (2002): 405–21; Michel Pastoureau, "Une justice exemplaire: les procès intentés aux animaux (XIIe–XVIe s.)," *Cahiers du Léopard d'Or* 9 (2000): 173–200; Jody Enders, "Homicidal Pigs and the Antisemitic Imagination," *Exemplaria* 14 (2002): 201–28; Bruce Holsinger, "Of Pigs and Parchment: Medieval Studies and the Coming of the Animal," *PMLA* 124 (2009): 616–19. The classic account of animal trials is E. P. Evans, *The Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals: The Lost History of Europe's Animal Trials* (London: Faber and Faber, 1906).

44. See Claudine Fabre-Vassas, *The Singular Beast: Jews, Christians, and the Pig*, trans. Carol Volk (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997) for an introduction to the polemic dynamics of pig-eating in Christianity. For a representative, if overwrought, demand that Christians recognize the legitimacy of meat-eating, see Eckbert of Schönau's *Sermones contra Catharos*, Sermon 6, "Contra secundam haeresim de esu carniū" (PL 195: 36C–39A).

45. From "If Animals Could Talk," in Linzey and Clarke, *Animal Rights*, 92. See also Cathryn Bailey, "On the Backs of Animals: The Valorization of Reason in Contemporary Animal Politics," in Donovan and Adams, *Feminist Care Tradition*, 346, "Reason did not first come into existence and then look for a venue to exhibit itself, [sic] rather, what much of philosophy came to define as reason only came into being as result [sic] of denying and quashing those attributes regarded as feminine or bodily." For an allied statement, see Peter Comestor's twelfth-century compendium of historicist glosses on Scripture, the *Historia Scholastica*, which explains the name of Seth's son Enos: "quod sonat homo, vel vir, quasi rationalis, et fortis" (which denotes "homo," or "man," as if rational and strong; PL 198: 1080).

in the forbidden), a life that, in sum, should never be treated instrumentally.⁴⁶ To put it simply, an animal is human when it can be murdered.⁴⁷

Though Deleuze and Guattari show both humans and animals ceaselessly transformed by conjunctions with objects, space, and other living things, and though knights in chivalric narrative sometimes wished they were killed in place of their horses, humans remain the masters: the knight owns the horse and may separate himself from a chivalric circuit by killing and eating his possession. Even medieval laws against hippophagy legislated only what could be *eaten*, rather than what could be *killed*.⁴⁸ Though analyses that recognize only unfixed assemblages cannot dissipate what humans alone do and allow to be done within these assemblages, I do not reject Deleuze and Guattari; I acknowledge their insights, recognizing that they describe at once a world of utopian promise freed from essentialist fantasies, and the world's actual shifting multiplicity. But I concentrate on animal instrumentality, which sustains the category of the human. Thus, for the majority of this book I concentrate on anthropocentric resistances or refusals to acknowledge the combinatory patterns tracked by Deleuze and Guattari, or, to put it more directly, I focus on the violence against animals through which humans attempt to claim a unique, oppositional identity for themselves.

46. For further discussion of animals and resurrection, as well as the anxieties and joys of anthropophagy, see my third chapter.

47. Objections to my distinction might be raised by pointing to the (unreliable) historical witness of Richard Fitzneale, *Dialogus de Scaccario and Constitutio Domus Regis*, ed. and trans. Emilie Amt and S. D. Church (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), I.x, 81–85; however, for reassessment of the history and meaning of the murder fine, which displaces its origin from “French” and English postconquest relations to the time of Cnut (or, indeed, to the time of King Ine of Wessex), see Bruce R. O’Brien, “From Morðor to Murdrum: The Preconquest Origin and Norman Revival of the Murder Fine,” *Speculum* 71 (1996): 321–57; Alan Cooper, “Extraordinary Privilege: The Trial of Penenden Heath and the Domesday Inquest,” *The English Historical Review* 116 (2001): 1180–81; and Stefan Jurasinski, “Reddatur Parentibus: The Vengeance of the Family in Cnut’s Homicide Legislation,” *Law and History Review* 20 (2002): 157–80. More to my point, see L. J. Downer, ed. and trans., *Leges Henrici primi* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), which weighs differently the deaths of “Franci” and foreigners, slaves, and English; all such deaths, however, still count as homicide committed against a being of unique individual value; the laws consider animals only as unindividuated property whose injury or death can be undone with a simple substitution, as at 281, “If anyone drives someone else’s animals against their will into an enclosure or some kind of hazard, and they are there killed or injured, he shall provide similar ones in return, or he shall swear an oath with six supporters that he did not do this.”

48. François Sigaut, “La viande de cheval a-t-elle été interdite par l’église?” *Ethno-zootechnie* 50 (1992): 85–91, and Rob Meens, “Eating Animals in the Early Middle Ages: Classifying the Animal World and Building Group Identities,” in Angela N. H. Creager and William C. Jordan, eds., *The Animal–Human Boundary: Historical Perspectives* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2002), 4–19.

This book implicitly asks Foucauldian questions such as “how are animals constituted as objects of our knowledge? How are we constituted as subjects in relation to our knowledge of animals? Does our discourse about animals relate to our construction of ourselves as human subjects?”⁴⁹ The book is indebted to Foucault in its attempt to interrupt, historicize, and re-open the supposed givenness of the “natural” categories of human and animal. It will not, however, engage in a Foucauldian analysis of power dynamics between humans and animals. As Foucault explained, a relationship of power acts upon acts themselves, whereas violence “acts upon a body or upon things; it forces, it bends, it breaks on the wheel, it destroys, or it closes the door on all possibilities.”⁵⁰ Power relationships cannot “exist without points of insubordination which, by definition, are means of escape,”⁵¹ whereas a relationship of violence may act against beings unable to resist. In essence, my concern is not with dressage, nor with the perspectives and modes of resistance of the animals themselves. My concern is with human acts against animals and with human attitudes towards their own and animal acts: not power, then, but capacities, which, in Foucault’s terminology, modify, use, consume, or destroy things. By no means, however, would a Foucauldian study of constitutive relationships between animals and humans be unwelcome.⁵²

I have allowed myself to be guided in my consideration of violence by

49. Clare Palmer, “‘Taming the Wild Profusion of Existing Things’? A Study of Foucault, Power, and Human/Animal Relationships,” *Environmental Ethics* 23 (2001): 347.

50. Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, trans. Leslie Sawyer, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 220.

51. *Ibid.*, 215.

52. Palmer, “Foucault, Power, and Animal/Human Relationships,” concludes with a model for such a study in its examination of the existence and experiences of a male Russian Blue cat named Yuri, bred to have a particular shape and color and to be tractable, capable of entering into a power relationship with its human master when it reaches maturity and begins marking its territory, and finally expelled from that relationship when it is inevitably castrated, abandoned, and/or euthanized. More recently, Sara Rinfret, “Controlling Animals: Power, Foucault, and Species Management,” *Society and Natural Resources* 22 (2009): 571–78, considers how the American protection of threatened wild species produces these species as docile, available for tourists, and anything but “wild,” an approach that would lend itself easily to studies of the animals of medieval hunting preserves. Another Foucauldian approach to power and animals might originate in his explanation, “There are three types of struggles: either against forms of domination (ethnic, social and religious); against forms of exploitation which separate individuals from what they produce; or against that which ties the individual to himself and submits him to others in this way (struggles against subjection, against forms of subjectivity and submission)” (“The Subject and Power,” 212). The animal could be understood to resist being reduced to being an animal; to resist having the product of its labor appropriated (one imagines a hunting dog absconding with the prey); or to resist being trained, or in fact to resist by training itself to some task or subjectivity independent of the needs of its human master.

a recent study by Slavoj Žižek in which he distinguishes between subjective, objective, and symbolic violence. Subjective violence, violence as it is typically understood, is committed by a “clearly identifiable agent”⁵³—an individual murderer, an anthropophagous pig, and so forth—whose act disturbs the supposedly peaceful relations of the status quo. Objective violence is the systemic and generally unacknowledged violence by which the status quo sustains itself, committed as a constitutive element of the “objective” status quo itself. Finally, symbolic violence is the violence of language, which distinguishes one subject from another (and thus renders a nonnarcissistic relation between subjects possible).⁵⁴ My thinking with Žižek’s terms could, in fact, start with his own work. When he asserts that, because they possess language, “humans exceed animals in their capacity for violence,”⁵⁵ he decides as confidently as any humanist that animals lack language, and, like any humanist, he sustains that difference by ranking human lives above animal lives: through the subjective violence of his own carnivorousness (exemplified by his notorious assertion that vegetarians are “degenerates . . . turn[ing] into monkeys”⁵⁶); through the objective violence of exercising the privilege of being human in a system that fundamentally values human life more than anything else; and finally through the symbolic violence by which he not only articulates a distinction between subject and world (a necessary activity for any thought capable of acknowledging others as others, for better or worse), but also posits an abyssal difference between animals and humans.⁵⁷ All these violences work in concert to generate the human and the animal.

53. Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (New York: Picador, 2008), 1. See also the 2007 interview “Divine Violence and Liberated Territories: SOFT TARGETS talks with Slavoj Žižek.” *Soft Targets*, <http://www.softtargetsjournal.com/web/zizek.php>.

54. Žižek uses the word “symbolic” in a Lacanian linguistic sense, not in the Gramscian hegemonic sense of “symbolic violence” described by Pierre Bourdieu (e.g., “the gentle, invisible form of violence, which is never recognized as such, and is not so much undergone as chosen, the violence of credit, confidence, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality, gifts, gratitude, piety—in short, all the virtues honoured by the code of honour—cannot fail to be seen as the most economical mode of domination, i.e., the mode which best corresponds to the economy of the system,” Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977], 192).

55. Žižek, *Violence*, 61.

56. Astra Taylor, *Žižek!* (Zeitgeist Films, 2005).

57. Žižek is no better than Lacan on animals, e.g., “What distinguishes man from animals is thus again the excessive fixation on the trauma (of the lost object, of the scene of the shattering jouissance, etc.); what sets the dynamism that pertains to the human condition in motion is the very fact that some traumatic X eludes every symbolization” (*The Plague of Fantasies* [London: Verso, 1997], 95; see, more recently, *The Parallax View* [Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006], 62–63 and 228).

My position on the interoperative violences through which humans seek to segregate and sustain themselves as human is akin to the points articulated in the early section of the philosophical note “Man and Beast” in Horkheimer and Adorno’s *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, where they observe that among the ideas “fundamental to Western anthropology” is that the animal’s “lack of reason is the proof of human dignity,” and that the proof of this dignity relies upon the scientific mutilation of animal bodies during vivisection.⁵⁸ However, because Horkheimer and Adorno ultimately do not seek to undo the categories of human and animal, I am by far most indebted to Derrida’s work, which recognizes that “power over the animal is . . . the essence of the human”⁵⁹ and that acts of dominating themselves establish the polar categories of human and animal. As he wrote,

Among nonhumans . . . there is an immense multiplicity of other living things that cannot in any way be homogenized, except by means of violence and willful ignorance, within the category of what is called the animal or animality in general. . . . The confusion of all nonhuman living creatures within the general and common category of the animal is not simply a sin against rigorous thinking, vigilance, lucidity, or empirical authority; it is also a crime.⁶⁰

This crime, “carnophallogocentrism,”⁶¹ subsumes any nonhuman animal

58. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 203–4; “Man and Beast” mars its treatment of the animal by believing animals possess a kind of pre-Enlightenment thought now lost to humans, e.g., at 205, “The world of animals is without concepts. There is no word to hold fast the identical in the flux of phenomena, the same genus in the succession of specimens, the same thing in changing situations.” Their approach to the animal, then, has much in common with Lacan’s idea that animals “lack the lack.”

59. Derrida, *Animal that Therefore*, 93. Derrida began this line of critique at least as early as *Of Spirit*, 57, where he remarks that Heidegger posits, almost despite himself, a dialectical relationship between humans and animals, and, still earlier, in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), which appeared in French in 1980; at 474 n51, Derrida writes “this discourse on the animal (in general) is no doubt consistent with all the categories and oppositions, all the bi- and tripartitions of the system. And it condenses no less the system’s greatest obscurity. The treatment of animality, as of everything that finds itself in *submission* by virtue of a hierarchical opposition, has always, in the history of humanist and phallogocentric metaphysics, revealed obscurantist resistance. It is obviously of capital interest” (original emphasis). For a fuller survey of Derrida’s engagement with the animal, see Matthew Chrulew, “Feline Divinanimality: Derrida and the Discourse of Species in Genesis,” *The Bible and Critical Theory* 2.2 (2006): 18.1–18.22, and Calarco, *Zoographies*, 103–49.

60. Derrida, *Animal that Therefore*, 48.

61. For “carnophallogocentrism,” see *ibid.*, 104.

into a monolithic category lacking whatever quality or qualities humanism considers essential and unique to humans, “speech or reason, the logos, history, laughing, mourning, burial, the gift, and so on”;⁶² for medieval Christianity, the “so on” includes, especially, the immortal soul and the resurrectable body, destined for eternity together. Because carnophallogocentrism traverses “the whole history of humanity,”⁶³ the question of the animal “represents the limit upon which all the great questions are formed and determined, as well as all the concepts that attempt to delimit what is ‘proper to man,’ the essence and future of humanity, ethics, politics, law, ‘human rights,’ ‘crimes against humanity,’ ‘genocide,’ etc.”⁶⁴ The punning title—*L’animal que donc je suis* (The Animal that Therefore I Am/Follow)—of a posthumous collection devoted to the animal question presents his argument in miniature. Revising Descartes’ cogito, Derrida argues that humans are in all senses of the words before and after animals. They discover themselves not in isolation before a world they apprehend through (or doubt in) their private thoughts, but by repeatedly enacting domination against “animals”; through such acts, humans retroactively claim the category of the human for themselves, and consign all other species to animality, without, however, being able to escape their own animality. The inability itself requires the repetition of the violence by which the human seeks to “catch up” to itself.

To counter carnophallogocentrism, Derrida asks that we hear, instead of the general term *les animaux* (animals), the neologism “l’animot,” the “animals-animalword,” which puns on the homonymic presence of “mot” (word) in the “maux”-ending of the French plural, and whose jarring solecism of a singular pronoun used with a plural-sounding word aims at least to discomfit humans by reminding them of the crime of creating the homogeneous category “animal.” Through Derrida’s coinage, animals might be understood, as Matthew Calarco glossed the term, “in their plural singularity rather than their generality.”⁶⁵ This would frustrate the operations of carnophallogocentrism by, among other things, transforming the simple binary of human and animal into an a- (rather than anthropo-) centric network of relations in which humans would be one node among many. Thus, although I have claimed and will claim throughout this book that the human is an effect rather than a cause of its domination of animals; that the human cannot abandon the subjugation of the animal without abandoning itself; and that the human can therefore be said not to exist except in its action of domination,

62. Ibid., 5.

63. Ibid., 14.

64. Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, “Violence against Animals,” in *For What Tomorrow . . .* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 62–63.

65. Calarco, *Zoographies*, 144.

this does not mean I am denying the existence of humans; furthermore, like Derrida, I resist “biologicistic continuism,”⁶⁶ which effaces the differences between all animals, including those between all humans. My objection is not with species per se, not with “dogs,” or “apes,” or “humans,” but with the word “animals,” especially when “an animal” is understood as existing (rather than as being *produced*) in opposition to “a human.”⁶⁷ A further note on terminology is required. Throughout, I tend to use “humans” instead of the pronominal categories such as “we” or “us,” because these pronouns present humanness as a *fait accompli* and obscure the mechanisms by which humans depersonalize animals. With Nicola Masciandaro, I ask:

We who? We is a person immunizing themselves against this stupidity [of being, of individuation], someone hiding the senselessness of *we* inside its own repetition. Usually the human *we* (human as *we*), or some subset collectivizing itself as universal. (original emphasis)⁶⁸

Throughout, I have endeavored to use the term “humans” to mean human animals, members of a particular species among other animals; “the human” to mean both the fantasy of human particularity (as linguistic, rational, ensouled, etc.) and also the practical and intellectual systems that aim to sustain this fantasy; and “the animal” to mean the fantasy necessarily conjunctive to that of “the human,” as “the human” sustains itself by generating the category “the animal.”⁶⁹ In this book, where I have used the general term “animals,” and where it is clear that I am not speaking of the fantasized homogeneous group of creatures distinguished from “the human,” I follow Derrida in asking that I be understood as referring to animals in their “plural

66. Derrida, *Animal that Therefore*, 30.

67. *Ibid.*, 41.

68. Nicola Masciandaro, “Individuation: This Stupidity,” *postmedieval* 1 (2010): 128.

69. Laurie Shannon, “The Eight Animals in Shakespeare; or, Before the Human,” *PMLA* 124 (2009): 472–79, relying on the *OED*, claims that the general term “animal” “hardly appears in English before the end of the sixteenth century”; Middle English does tend to use “beste” for nonhuman (terrestrial) animals, and “animal” for anything possessing a soul. But in medieval Britain, English was of course not the only nor even necessarily the dominant language. While Latin tends to use *brutum*, *fera*, and *pecus* for nonhuman animals and “animal” for living things in general, it sometimes distinguishes “animal” from “homo,” for example, in grammatical treatises, which contrast the inarticulate “vox animalium,” such as neighing or mooing, to the articulate, linguistic “vox hominum”: see Thomas of Cantimpré, discussed in the next chapter, or the several examples presented in Christopher Cannon, *The Grounds of English Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 116–19; see also the *Anglo-Norman Dictionary*, s.v., “aumaille” (available at *The Anglo-Norman On-Line Hub*, <http://www.anglo-norman.net/>), where references to nonhuman animals predominate.

singularity”;⁷⁰ readers are also encouraged to change the relative pronouns “that” or “which” to “who” or “whom” whenever they wish.⁷¹

The chapters that follow make and elaborate on the consequences of the following points: the human tries to distinguish itself from other animals by laying claim to the sole possession of reflective language, reason, culture, and above all an immortal soul and resurrectable body; it lays claim to these qualities for itself, and itself only, through acts of violence against others that, by *routinely* suffering this violence, are designated “animal”; because the category of the human is a retroactive and relative effect of the action of domination, no such human can do without the domination of animals without abandoning itself. Beliefs about the human and animal remain largely consistent throughout the texts and practices I examine; nor did dominant thought and practices ever discourage or condemn the human consumption of animals and other forms of animal exploitation, much less argue that humans should reciprocally offer themselves up to animals. The Middle Ages of this book therefore functions synchronically. Indeed, medieval Christianity’s doctrinal justifications for the human domination of ani-

70. In these arguments, my debt to Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 25, should be obvious: “gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed.” I am also guided by Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 25–26, where she writes that “relationships are the smallest possible patterns for analysis.” For an early appraisal of the role of “othering” animals in human self-definition, see Esther Cohen, “Animals in Medieval Perceptions: The Image of the Ubiquitous Other,” in *Animals in Human Society: Changing Perspectives*, ed. Aubrey Manning and James Serpell (New York: Routledge, 1994), 76. Other critics of the human have made similar points: as part of her observation that Early Modern considerations of reason always reference animal irrationality, Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning*, 36, argues, “In a world without animals, humans would not only lose companions, workers, sources of food, clothing, and so on; they would lose themselves”; Kelly Oliver’s engagement with Agamben’s *The Open* in *Animal Lessons*, 233, suggests that “we could say that the notion of the human acts as a transcendental signifier produced through the various and multifarious instances of its own failure. The truly human is an empty ideal produced through the continual disavowal of the failure of homo sapiens to escape its animality. The so-called abyss between man and animal is produced by abjecting animality from the concept of humanity”; and Carol J. Adams, “The War on Compassion,” in Donovan and Adams, *Feminist Care Tradition*, 22, observes that “*human* and *animal* are definitions that exist in tandem, each drawing its power from the other in a drama of circumscribing: the animal defining the human, the human defining the animal” (original emphasis). See also Carol J. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (New York: Continuum, 1990); Fiddes, *Meat*; and Julia Twigg, “Food for Thought: Purity and Vegetarianism,” *Religion* 9 (1979): 13–35.

71. Analysis of “who” can be found in Gaëtanelle Gilquin and George M. Jacobs, “Elephants Who Marry Mice Are Very Unusual: The Use of the Relative Pronoun Who with Nonhuman Animals,” *Society & Animals* 14 (2006): 79–105, which observes that “Changes in language . . . are not enough, because—as we have seen—the use of (who) with nonhuman animals does not necessarily reflect a positive attitude toward them” (99).

mals, based on arguments for the linguistic, rational, and ethical particularity of humans, can still be heard today, a persistent medieval voice despite the insights of evolutionary biology and modern ethology (yet, as I occasionally point out, some medieval works provide a more generous vision of being in the world than that offered by the dominant strains of either medieval Christianity or modern humanism). My broad claims require that I treat a broad variety of texts, sometimes at a gallop, including legal, doctrinal, and scientific literature, chivalric narrative, hymns, hagiography, and parody, primarily works written in English, French, and Latin, ranging from the early centuries of Christianity to the fifteenth century. I have focused on the Christian Middle Ages, specifically Western Christianity, leaving for future projects and for other scholars considerations of the operations of the human and animal in heterodox Christianities as well as in Islam, Judaism, and other religious systems and their rituals.⁷² My study continues to bear the mark of its inception, an abandoned dissertation on meat-eating in the Middle Ages. I have therefore been concerned from the very beginning with human violence against animals, broadening my research to inquire how and why humans make animals available to themselves for guiltless slaughter. My ongoing interest in medieval practices and thought concerning the violence inflicted on actual animals accounts for the absence of attention to the usual subjects of medievalist animal studies: there is nothing in here on the Reynard tradition or beast epics more generally, whether *Ecbasis Captivi*, *Ysengrimus*, or the *Speculum Stultorum*; little to nothing on fables, nor, for that matter, on Ramon Llull's *Book of Beasts* or Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale*; nor is there any sustained attention to bestiaries or avian debates such as Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules*.⁷³ The inception of the project as a work on meat-eating also accounts for the relative lack of attention to animalized humans, appearing in, among many other works, Alcuin of York's "Lament

72. Some such studies already exist: for example, Elijah Judah Schochet, *Animal Life in Jewish Tradition: Attitudes and Relationships* (New York: Ktav, 1984); and Richard Foltz, *Animals in Islamic Tradition and Muslim Cultures* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006), particularly 11–84, which discusses, among other things, the implications in the Qur'an that animals each have their own language and even prophets; injunctions against cruelty to animals in various ahadith; a ninth-century poet, Qasim Yufus ibn Qasim, known for his "elegies to birds, cats, and goats" (67); and the extraordinary *Case of the Animals versus Man before the King of Jinns*, a product of the "Pure Brethren" of tenth-century Basra, in which animals argue against the cruelty and violence of the "Adamites." One of their works was adapted by a late medieval Catalan friar who converted to Islam: Anselm Turmeda, *Dispute de L'Âne*, ed. A. Llinares (Paris: Vrin, 1984) has a human and donkey argue over the relative honor of humans or animals; the human wins the argument by pointing out that God chose to incarnate in a human rather than animal body.

73. For a recent study of many of these works, see Jill Mann, *From Aesop to Reynard: Beast Literature in Medieval Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

for a Cuckoo,” in which the author imagines a drunkard disciple as a dead bird;⁷⁴ the humiliation of the *beani*, first-year university students, initiated into academic life by a ritual sheering of their hats’ goatish horns;⁷⁵ the many genres presented in Jan Ziolkowski’s *Talking Animals: Medieval Latin Beast Poetry*;⁷⁶ or, for that matter, any number of literary dreams in which humans appear as animals.

Matt Cartmill’s *A View to a Death in the Morning* considers the attraction of the now discredited paleoanthropological hunting hypothesis, which claimed that uniquely human traits evolved because Australopithecines forsook a cringing existence in the forests to take up hunting on the plains. Adherents of the hypothesis embraced it for various reasons—to justify violence as the most fundamental human trait, to mourn the human separation from the community of animals, to reinforce postwar expectations of the coming nuclear eschaton—but they all understood that violence made the human, for good or for ill.⁷⁷ I argue that a version of the hunting hypothesis was prevalent in the Middle Ages. When Henry II denied other humans the right to hunt—that is, the right to dominate animals—he stripped them of the full possession of their humanity, confining them, as it were, to the trees with the other animals.

For this crime against the human, Adam of Eynsham made Henry suffer, turning Henry’s own horse—his own dominated animal, the animal almost requisite for personal, public display of nobility—into the primary agent of Henry’s suffering. What could have saved Henry from such a fate? What, but the deaths of animals?

Overview of Chapters

The book begins by discussing how the very arbitrariness by which humans distinguished their souls and bodies from those of animals supported their claims of human distinctiveness; next, human attempts to delegitimize animals’ independent violence; next, the ways that human violence entangled

74. Translation in Paul Edward Dutton, ed., *Carolingian Civilization: A Reader*, 2nd ed. (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2004), 136–37.

75. Ruth Mazo Karras, *From Boys to Men: Formations of Masculinity in Late Medieval Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 100–108.

76. Jan Ziolkowski, *Talking Animals: Medieval Latin Beast Poetry, 750–1150* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993).

77. Matt Cartmill, *A View to a Death in the Morning: Hunting and Nature through History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), chaps. 1, 2, and 10.

immortal humans with mortal animals; then, having established the rules and problems of human violence against animals, I proceed to the embarrassment about this violence in works concerned with marginal human cases of monsters and ascetics; and finally, to the bloody relationship of butchers and pigs, the most human of humans and most animal of animals. This pessimistic narrative about the human finishes more hopefully in the epilogue, which attempts to imagine a less violent way for humans to be with others.

The first chapter, “How to Make a Human,” establishes my foundational arguments. Through an examination of several medieval encyclopedias and key doctrinal texts of medieval Christianity, I argue for the centrality of the domination of animals to the dynamic and inessential structure of the human. I concentrate first on the fifteenth-century Middle English catechetical verse encyclopedia *Sidrak and Bokkus*, which bases its claim for human uniqueness on animal degradation. In *Sidrak*’s tautological arguments, as in Augustine’s *On Free Will* and many other medieval works, reason allows humans to dominate irrational animals, and the proof of animal irrationality is their domination by humans. Human domination of what it calls animal thus produces the ideal categories of both human and animal, each with its constitutive mental and spiritual characteristics: on the one side, an immortal, reasonable soul, language, laughter, and so forth, and on the other, a mortal, irrational animal soul that enables only instinctual action. I then examine a textual tradition concerned with human and animal bodies. The tradition presents the stereotypical human form—upright, bipedal, manifesting no disabilities—as both the incarnation and the enabler of uniquely human mental and spiritual traits: humans can gaze upon the heavens and consider divinity, whereas animals, being prone to the ground, can think only about their food. Peasants, upright but living like beasts; monkeys, upright but animal; and humanoid monsters—these all challenge the tradition, which finally violates its equation of bipedality and reason by asserting that animals, as such, are irrational regardless of their shape. The assertion reveals that the claim for the inherent rationality of the bipedal body is, at its core, yet another instance of human domination of animals: bodily form matters not so much as the dominating act of categorization, an act most evident when it is most arbitrary.

The second chapter, “Mastering Violence,” examines the human monopolization of violence, the fundamental tool of domination. Through a combination of doctrine, narrative, and other practices, humans subjugated animals to human violence while delegitimizing their self-defense or -determination. Whether in hunting or hagiographic narrative, any independently violent animal that humans encountered would end up domesticated or dead. Such attitudes towards animal violence account for a peculiar feature of the

penitentials, clerical handbooks on Christian behavior written between the sixth and twelfth centuries. Nearly every penitential prohibited Christians from eating animals that had been killed by other animals, defining this meat as *morticinum*, carrion. I focus on a set of ninth-century works that provide virtually the only medieval justification of this prohibition: humans should not eat meat from animals they have not killed. The longest of these works, a letter to a German king, amends the prohibition to allow humans to eat the flesh of animals killed by hunting dogs under human control. As it explains, the hunting dog is no more responsible for killing an animal than a pen is responsible for writing a charter. Carrion should be understood as “pollution,” in Mary Douglas’s sense of pollution as a category scandal. To repair the scandal of independent animal violence, humans, or at least elite humans, did not simply discard carrion but rather distributed it to various kinds of outsiders: the poor, lepers, “bestial men,” and certain domestic animals. Through this action, elites undid the illicit violence of animal carnivorousness by simultaneously regaining control of the meat and showing their contempt for both the meat and the animal violence that produced it.

“In and Out of Mortal Flesh,” the third chapter, turns from the human control of carnivorous violence to the differentiation of human flesh from that of animals and to the ways that humans rendered the objective violence of the human status quo invisible. It begins by considering the exclusion of animals from hopes promised by most Christian resurrection doctrine. As Aquinas explained, there would be no animals in the afterlife, since humans would no longer need to eat them. He is but one of several medieval thinkers who characterized animal life as anthropocentric: Paulinus of Nola considers a cow that willingly offered itself up to sacrifice at Felix’s shrine, and Heinemann of Bonn pigs that refused to desecrate the Eucharist by eating it. Paulinus and Heinemann, writing at either end of the Middle Ages, insist that these animals should be understood only as reminders to humans of properly virtuous human behavior. Humans treat animals most instrumentally when they kill and eat them. Though this act distinguishes humans from animals, several Christian scholars worried that meat-eating also contaminated human with animal bodies. The violence of the human structure seems to turn against itself: humans intermingled with animals might become, like animals, unable to resurrect, or they might resurrect into bodies now eternally conjoined to those of animals. Similarly, scholars worried that humans eaten by animals might also be unable to resurrect. To neutralize worries about the loss of human bodily integrity and the resulting loss of human selfhood, mainstream medieval Christian resurrection doctrine declared that anthropophagous animals’ digestion had no long-term effect on the human bodies they ate, while human digestion either did not assimilate any food

to the “truth of human nature,” the only aspect that would resurrect, or it assimilated food so thoroughly that it became resurrectable human flesh. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of medieval anthropophagy texts. Humans defended themselves from anthropophagy in three ways: most simply by forbidding it; and by telling stories about it and not about the consumption of animals, which marks human lives as singularly worthy of commemoration; and finally by alimentary “interpassivity” (Žižek’s term for “enjoying through the other”), through which humans convinced themselves of their own superiority by imagining the intense desires their particularly delicious flesh provoked in others.

The fourth chapter, “Domesticating Beasts: Cynocephali, The Wild Herdsman, and Prudentius’s Indomitable Sheep,” examines marginal cases concerned with monsters and ascetics. All these works advocate the necessity of animal subjugation, but at the same time characterize those who engage in routine violence against animals as bestial. This maneuver enables the human simultaneously to recognize the necessity of domination to itself and yet to conceal the contingency of its claims to essential selfhood. Ratramnus of Corbie’s ninth-century letter on cynocephali, dog-headed people, and Chrétien de Troyes’ portrayal of the Wild Herdsman in *Yvain* each determine that their monstrous characters must be human, because they domesticate animals; yet Ratramnus insists that the cynocephali dominate their animals *gently*, whereas Chrétien portrays the Herdsman’s violence as bestial and sordid compared with the technological and honorable violence of his knights. The two works participate in a tradition of warnings that cautions against human cruelty to animals, not out of consideration for the animals, but so that humans inured to slaughtering animals might not endanger other humans. These and several other medieval texts profess sympathy for animals without recommending that humans renounce the domination through which humans sustain their sense of difference from animals. The chapter’s final section, on the “Ante Cibus” of the foundational Christian poet Prudentius, considers a similar deflection, this one concerned not with humans apparently too bestial but rather those too reluctant to exercise their domination over animals. “Ante Cibus” praises God for the gift of Creation to humans and humans for their ingenuity in hunting animals, but then characterizes a carnivorous diet as barbarous and inimical to the church. However, by imagining its ascetics as regal doves and sheep tyrannically subjugating animal carnivores, Prudentius preserves his status and that of his fellows as the most dominant of worldly creatures even while pretending not to be sullied by the implications of how he maintains his dominance.

“Pigs, Butchers, and The Ends of Humanity,” the penultimate chapter, concentrates on pigs and butchers. In a human system that produces the ani-

mal by dominating what it calls animal, pigs might be thought the emblematic animal: though humans raise them only to kill and eat them, pigs *must* be killed to be reduced to being merely animals, because they resemble humans so closely in their behavior, appetite, and internal anatomy. I examine Chaucer's "The Former Age," an anti-Muslim tale in which pigs kill and eat Mohamed, and an antisemitic tale in which the young Jesus transforms Jews into pigs, all of which imply that people who refuse to dominate animals properly, especially pigs, might as well be pigs. I explore the dynamics of the human domination of pigs in detail through the fifteenth-century Middle English chivalric narrative, *The Avowyng of Arthur*, which features an anthropophagous, butchering, and knightlike boar. In the tale, a huntsman's inability to dominate the boar exposes him to being butchered like a boar himself, and even Arthur can distinguish himself from the boar, and imperfectly at that, only when he finally kills and dismembers it. I then examine butchery narratives and practices: the *Testamentum Porcelli*, a fourth-century parody popular in the Middle Ages, in which a butcher grants a pig time to dictate its last testament; Anglo-Norman and Middle English versions of a story in which Saint Nicholas resurrects three scholars killed, dismembered, and cooked as pork pies by a butcher; and finally the butchery legislation of late medieval London, which sought to conceal the trade and its waste products, and thus to conceal the contingency of being human. All these works and practices overtly articulate an anxiety that the other works I examine admit only reluctantly and indirectly: that without being recognized as human, without, at least, escaping the knife, the human is but an animal.

Having illustrated the dominant logic of human supremacy in the Middle Ages, my epilogue considers cases in medieval literature that offer more generous, less anthropocentric modes of being with others. I begin with the tradition of the fifteen signs of the Last Judgment, which sometimes evidences concern for the grief of the animals at the very moment when humans and God abandon them to their utter destruction; then a peasant's hospitality for his oxen in an incident recounted by Paulinus of Nola; a ninth-century saint's life in which a horse is buried as though it were a human; and finally *Sir Gowther*, a fourteenth-century Middle English chivalric narrative, which, in a moment of astonishing tenderness between a human and a charitable greyhound, temporarily dissolves the categories of human and animal. Inspired by the openness to nonanthropocentric considerations in these episodes, and by Haraway's critique of identity, Ralph Acampora's phenomenological notion of "symphysis," and the ethical work of Leonard Lawlor and Derrida, I conclude by imagining how humans might cease to project, and to defend, their selves against other animals.

CHAPTER 1



HOW TO MAKE A HUMAN

I.

“Elles were Beest Lich to Man”: Dominance, Human Reason, and Invocations of Likeness in *Sidrak and Bokkus*

Sidrak and Bokkus is a 12,000-line metrical encyclopedia in which the philosopher Sidrak answers the questions of King Bokkus. Translations into Danish, Dutch, and Italian survive, as do more than seventy manuscripts of the French original, which was written no earlier than 1291, and several manuscripts of English verse and prose translations. Its question-and-answer structure is common among medieval encyclopedias, such as the *Prose Salernitan Questions* and Honorius of Autun’s *Elucidarium*, although, unlike these, *Sidrak and Bokkus* does not organize its entries in any particular order.¹ *Sidrak and Bokkus*’s questions consider the nature of God, angels, precious stones, celestial bodies, eschatology, and natural events such as thunder or earthquakes. Other questions advise on mar-

1. Brian Lawn, ed., *The Prose Salernitan Questions: An Anonymous Collection dealing with Science and Medicine written by an Englishman c. 1200 with an Appendix of Ten Related Collections* (London: Oxford University Press, 1979); and also Honorius of Autun’s *Elucidarium* (PL 172: 1109A–1176D). For the roots of this genre, see Annelie Volgers and Claudio Zamagni, eds., *Erotapokriseis: Early Christian Question-and-Answer Literature in Context. Proceedings of the Utrecht Colloquium, 13–14 October 2003* (Leuven: Peters, 2004); and the classic treatment in Heinrich Dörrie and Hermann Dörries, “Erotapokriseis,” *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 6 (1966): 342–70.

riage, social conduct, and warfare. A great many others resolve binaries into hierarchies—men over women, the soul over the body—to determine the proper relationships among humans, between humans and the rest of Creation, and most importantly between humans and their Creator. On none of these points does *Sidrak and Bokkus* break new ground. Built from the common material of medieval Christian doctrine, its only distinguishing features are its length, popularity, and its frequent consideration of animals. All these factors make it an ideal work for illustrating how doctrinal Christianity defined and defended the human in the Middle Ages.²

At one point, *Sidrak* poses the question “Siþen we of Goddis liknesse be, / Whi mowen we not doo as did he?” (Since we have God’s likeness, why can’t we do as he did?; 2787–88). The answer demonstrates both the pedagogical purpose of the question and the anxiety that the paired question and answer were meant to quell: in this case, the answer concludes that although humans “mowen not neuerþelesse / Be as stronge and as wijs as” (might not nevertheless be as strong as wise as; 2806–7) God, they are still “worþi to þat blis” (worthy of that bliss; 2816) of spending eternity with God in heaven. Clearly, *Sidrak*’s worry is less about human likeness to God than about whether humans can ultimately escape death. To arrive at this point, *Sidrak* might have employed any number of doctrinal proofs, perhaps by arguing for the immortality of the rational soul, or by recalling God’s particular solicitude for humans, evidenced in the special attention humans received during creation; the incarnation and crucifixion, meant to rescue humans from Adam’s guilt; or even, tautologically, the human resurrection itself. Instead, *Sidrak* proves human immortality by remembering that humans subjugate animals.

For, as soon as it poses the question of human likeness to God, *Sidrak* responds:

To Goddis liknesse we ben dight:
þerfore he haþ ȝouen vs might
Aboue eche oþer creature

2. T. L. Burton, ed., *Sidrak and Bokkus: A Parallel-Text Edition from Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 559 and British Library, MS Lansdowne 793*, 2 vols., EETS o. s. 311, 312 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). Burton’s introduction discusses genre, manuscripts, and sources. I will be quoting from the Lansdowne manuscript, which is the lengthier of the two. Apart from their differences in length, the Lansdowne and Laud versions are largely the same for the points discussed here. Both manuscripts date from the second half of the fifteenth century. Although the encyclopedia begins with a narrative of the philosopher converting the king to Christianity, in the encyclopedia itself, the two names function only as designators for “question” and “answer.” Henceforth I refer to *Sidrak and Bokkus* as *Sidrak*, identifying the “characters” as “question” or “answer” if necessary.

þat he made here forto dure;
 And for þat liknesse so knowe we
 Alle þinges þat in erthe be.
 We kunne worche besily and wynne
 And almesdede knowe fro synne;
 All creatures we mowen take
 And seruauntes of hem to vs make;
 And all oþir þing þat is noght
 To Goddis liknesse here iwroght
 Haþ no knowing ne might þerto
 To do al þing þat we here do,
 Ne comaunde vs not þeine may
 As þat [we] done hem euery day. (2789–804)

We are made in God's likeness: therefore, he has given us might over every other creature that he made here; and because of that likeness, we know all earthly things. We can work diligently and profit, and know good deeds from sin; we can take all creatures and make them servants to us; and all other things here that are not made in God's likeness have no knowledge nor any might to do all the things that we do here, nor may they command us, as we command them every day.

Sidrak's division of sentient worldly life into the two categories "human" and "animal" is of course as much a commonplace as is its ranking of humans above animals. So too is the importance *Sidrak* places on human reason for distinguishing between human and animal.³ Participating in a Western philosophical tradition that, as Richard Sorabji argues, originates with Aristotle, Christian thinkers as diverse as the foundational Augustine and the ninth-century court scholar John Scottus Eriugena, whose *Periphyseon* would repeatedly be condemned as heretical, think much the same thing on reason, humans, and animals:⁴ "Animals do not laugh or make jokes, but that is not the highest human activity; nor do animals seek fame

3. Unsurprisingly, the definition of the category "reason" was subject to much debate in medieval Christian doctrine and philosophy. For a wider consideration of the various definitions of this term, particularly in its polemical uses, see Gilbert Dahan, "L'usage de la ratio dans la polémique contre les juifs," in *Diálogo filosófico-religioso entre cristianismo, judaísmo e islamismo durante la edad media en la Península Ibérica: actes du colloque international de San Lorenzo de El Escorial 23–26 juin 1991*, ed. Horacio Santiago-Otero (Turnhout: Brepols, 1994), 289–94.

4. Sorabji, *Animal Minds*. For the rationalist distinction of humans from animals, see also Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning*, and Janet E. Spittler, *Animals in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles: The Wild Kingdom of Early Christian Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 14–26.

and glory and power, but our desire for these does not make us better than animals. The difference is in reason";⁵ "For it is precisely this that is man's difference from the other animals, that he possesses reason, just as it is their difference from him that they do not."⁶ John of Salisbury's argument in his *Metalogicon* for the distinctiveness of humans among all other mortal life neatly encapsulates the tradition:

Although brute animals have a certain power of discernment, whereby they select their food, shun snares, leap across precipitous places, and recognize relationship, still, they do not reason, but are rather moved by their natural instincts. . . . [At Creation] God, breathing life into man, willed that he partake of the divine reason. The soul of man, which comes from, and will return to God, alone contemplates divine truths. This prerogative is, in fact, almost man's sole claim to preeminence over other animals.⁷

Like the *Metalogicon*, *Sidrak* binds the human monopoly of reason in this world to the uniquely human assurance of immortality and speaks of human "knowledge" as so extraordinary that, were it not for angels, demons, and God, the phrase "human knowledge" might be understood as pleonastic.

The complex of capabilities encompassed by knowledge in *Sidrak* includes moral knowledge of the distinction between "almesdede" (good deeds) and "synne" (sin), and, in addition, the potential to "know . . . alle þinges þat in earthe be" (know all earthly things; 2792). Whatever animals know how to do, they fall short of human capabilities, for they "haþ no knowing ne might þerto / to do al þing þat we here do" (have no knowledge nor any might to do all the things that we do here; 2801–2). *Sidrak's* off-kilter comparison of animal knowing to human action implies that animal irrationality bars them from far more than thinking abstractly or meditating on divinity. What "we here do" may include good deeds and the compiling of encyclopedias, but in this answer it primarily means subjugation: because animals "kunne" (know) less than humans—and "kunne" encompasses both "knowing how" and ability, "being able to"⁸—animals "ne

5. Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, trans. Thomas Williams (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1993), 69.

6. John Scottus Eriugena, *Periphyseon (The Division of Nature)*, trans. John O'Meara and I. P. Sheldon-Williams (Montréal: Éditions Bellarmin, 1987), 375.

7. John of Salisbury, *The Metalogicon: A Twelfth-Century Defense of the Verbal and Logical Arts of the Trivium*, trans. Daniel D. McGarry (Gloucester: P. Smith, 1971), 227.

8. See *MED*, s.v., "cōnnen" (v.), definitions 1–5, especially 1, "to have ability, capability, or skill," and definition 3, "to have mastery of (a skill), be versed or competent in (a craft, occupation, activity)."

comaunde vs not þeine may / as þat [we] done hem euery day” (may not command us, as we command them every day; 2803–4).⁹ Animal ignorance delivers them to human domination while protecting humans from being dominated in turn by animals. But animal ignorance does more than this: confronted with their own worldly weakness, confronted with the certainty of death, humans recall their domination of animals and find in this domination a guarantee of human rationality and immortality.

In making this argument, *Sidrak* joins a Christian tradition given voice in, among other works, Hugh of St. Victor’s commentary on the Pentateuch, which observes, “sicut Deus hominibus, ita homo animalibus dominatur” (just as God rules over man, so does man rule over animals; *PL* 175:37D), and the Pentateuch commentary of pseudo-Bede, which likewise states, “homo autem ad imaginem Dei factus dicitur secundum interiorem hominem, ubi est ratio et intellectus; non propter corpus, sed illam potestatem Dei, qua omnibus animantibus imperat” (man is said to be made in the image of God according to his interior, where there is reasoning and understanding, but not in his body, except for that power of God by which he commands all living things; *PL* 91: 200D).¹⁰ Both commentaries echo a key interpretation of medieval Christianity’s foundational statement of human uniqueness and animal degradation, Genesis 1:26—“And He said: Let Us make man to Our image and likeness: and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth,” glossed as follows in Augustine’s *Literal Commentary on Genesis*:

At this point we must also note that God, after saying “Our image,” immediately added, “And let him have dominion over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air” and the other irrational animals. From this we are to understand that man was made to the image of God in that part of his nature wherein he surpasses [antecellit] the brute beasts. This is, of course, his reason or mind or intelligence, or whatever we wish to call it.¹¹

9. The Lansdowne manuscript omits the “we”; the Laud manuscript reads “as we doo hem euery day” (1756).

10. For further commentary on this frequent exegetical point, see Gilbert Dahan, “L’exégèse de Genèse 1, 26 dans les commentaires du XIIe siècle,” *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 38 (1992): 135 and 135 n56.

11. Augustine, *Literal Commentary on Genesis*, trans. John Hammond Taylor (New York: Newman Press, 1982), 1.96. For more on the Biblical context of this verse and related Christian exegesis, see Jeremy Cohen, *Be Fertile and Increase, Fill the Earth and Master It: The Ancient and Medieval Career of a Biblical Text* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 22–27, 224–29, and, for Augustine in particular, 246 and 248 n85; for further comments on the afterlife of the Augustinian position, see Dahan, “L’exégèse de Genèse,”

Augustine relies on the human domination of animals to prove human rational distinctiveness in at least in two other places. In his *Eighty-Three Different Questions*, he poses the question “What Proof is There that Men are Superior to Animals,” and answers, “Among the many ways in which it can be shown that man is superior to animals by virtue of his reason, this is clear to all: animals can be domesticated and tamed by men, but men not at all by animals.”¹² In his dialogue *On Free Choice of the Will* Augustine considers the relationship between reason and dominance more thoroughly. To prove that humans can choose to follow or not to follow the Eternal Law, he must prove that humans possess reason. He might have pointed to human laughter, architecture, or self-restraint. Instead, he veers away from a direct proof by first considering animal irrationality:

We often see animals that have been tamed by human beings. I don’t mean just their bodies; their spirits too are so much under human control that they obey a human will by a kind of instinct and habit. Do you think that there is any way that a wild animal, however strong or ferocious, however keen his senses, could in turn attempt to subdue a human being? Even though it could destroy a body by stealth?¹³

His interlocutor admits that animals are animate, and then adds, “there is something that is present in our souls in virtue of which we are superior, which is lacking in their souls, thus allowing them to be subdued by us. It is obvious to anyone that it is something of considerable importance. What

especially 132, 135, 137–8, and 141.

12. Augustine, *Eighty-Three Different Questions*, trans. David Mosher (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1982), 43–44. For further discussion of this passage, see Gillian Clark, “The Fathers and the Animals: The Rule of Reason?” in Linzey and Yamamoto, *Animals on the Agenda*, 67–71.

13. Augustine, *Free Choice*, 13. For other, later versions of such an argument, see Neil Cartlidge, ed. and trans., *The Owl and the Nightingale* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2001), 773–88, where the nightingale, to dismiss the importance of the owl’s strength, argues that her clever song is like the force of human reason, which can subdue all animals, no matter how strong or swift; and Adelard of Bath, *Conversations with His Nephew: On the Same and the Different; Questions on Natural Science; and, On Birds*, ed. and trans. Charles Burnett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), *Questions on Natural Science*, Section 15, which explains that humans, despite lacking horns or great strength or swiftness, master other animals: “For he has that which is much better and more worthy than these—I mean reason, by which he excels the very brute animals so much that they are tamed by it, and, once tamed, bridles are put on them, and once bridled, they are put to various tasks.” Burnett’s note, 230 n27, links Adelard’s argument to Cicero, *De re publica* III.2, and Lactantius, *De opificio Dei* III, 16–19. For other early articulations, see Epictetus, *Discourses* 2.8.7–8, and Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 3.12, quoted and discussed in Spittler, *Animals in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 19 and 37.

better name for that than ‘reason’?” Augustine applauds the efficiency of this answer. Augustine might instead have pointed out that animals cannot write treatises on free will; he might have referenced physiological arguments against animal reason common in ancient natural history;¹⁴ he might have considered animals or humans in isolation from one another. Instead, for Augustine, humans and animals can each be understood as such only in relation to the other, specifically, in a relation in which humans naturally dominate all animals. From this relationship of domination, Augustine infers that humans, unlike animals, have reason and therefore know they are alive, which in turn allows humans to know the eternal law, which, finally, allows humans to choose to follow or abandon it. Although the keystone of Augustine’s entire argument is the human subjugation of animals, his logic is at best flimsy: the invisible capacity through which humans dominate animals apparently stronger than they are need not be honored with the name “reason.” Whatever this capacity is, through it humans degrade animals and elevate themselves, and through this humans name, distribute, or deny capabilities as they like, condemning animals to a merely mortal existence, meant only for human use, while claiming immortality for themselves.

Sidrak simply restates the Augustinian point more explicitly. Animal servitude is human certainty. This is true to such a degree that in this tradition animal servitude may be understood as the *cause* of human uniqueness. To recapitulate *Sidrak*’s explanation, since humans were made in God’s likeness:

Perfore he haþ zouen vs might
 Aboue eche oþer creature
 þat he made here forto dure;
 And for þat liknesse so knowe we
 Alle þinges þat in erthe be. (2790–94)

Therefore, he has given us might over every other creature than he made here; and because of that likeness, we know all earthly things.

Capabilities that the French original, *Sydrac le philosophe*, presents in a list¹⁵ the translation presents in what might be understood as a causal rela-

14. Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning*, 7–38.

15. The French version of this passage in *Sidrak* reads: “Le roi demande: Puis que nos somes fait a la semblance de Dieu, por qoi ne poons nos faire comme il fait? Sydrac respont: Voirement Dieu nos a fait a sa semblance, et por ce nos a il doné seignorie sur toutes autres creatures que il fist et que totes nos facent reverence et sont a nostre commandement. Et por cele meesme semblance connoissons nos les choses qui sont et ont esté et seront, et si coinnois-

tion. The function of the clause “for þat liknesse” (because of that likeness) is enigmatic: “liknesse” may indicate a general resemblance to God, which includes both the capacity to dominate and, as rational creatures, to know all earthly things; or “liknesse” may reference God’s “might” over creatures specifically, which *consequently*—“for þat liknesse so” (*because of that likeness [to God’s domination of his creation], therefore*)—results in the human possession of reason. This may indeed be overreading, but even if *Sidrak* only implies, through its muddled translation, that the human domination of animals causes rather than just demonstrates human rationality, it nonetheless organizes the passage to assert that human rational uniqueness would be unrecognizable without animal subjugation.

Sidrak supports its human system through several forceful arguments for the total availability of animals to humans for slaughter and consumption. It avers that “Fruit in erþe and fleisshe in lond / And fisshe in water, þoruȝ his sond, / To mannes nede is ordeined al / And þerby he lyue shal” (fruit on earth and flesh on land, and fish in water, through [God’s] dispensation, is all meant for man’s need, and thereby he shall live; 3617–20) and, in two other entries, makes the same argument at greater length. When it asks, “Is it any synne a man to ete / Al þing þat he may get?” (is it a sin for man to eat anything that he can obtain?; 6771–72), its answer has the implicit support of traditional Christian exegesis of the Sixth Commandment of the Decalogue, “Thou Shalt Not Kill,” and of Genesis 9:2–4, in which God grants Noah and his descendants the right to kill and eat animals. Augustine established the foundational exegesis of the Sixth Commandment by declaring that the commandment applies to neither plants nor animals,¹⁶ and Bede’s *Hexameron* the foundational exegesis of Genesis 9:2–4 by explaining that God gave humans domination over animals but “profecto esse super homines prohibet” (surely it is forbidden to be over men; *PL* 91: 107A): from this insight, he develops a theory of right rule, without ever pausing, as did some commentators, to question whether present-day humans should follow the diet of Noah and his flood-weakened

sons nostre bien et nostre mal et savons laborer et travailler et gaignier et vivre, et si savons nos toutes autres choses et toutes autres creatures en nostre servise travailler et laborer” (Ernstpeter Ruhe, ed., *Sydrac le philosophe: le livre de la fontaine de toutes sciences: édition des enzyklopädischen Lehrdialogs aus dem XIII Jahrhundert* [Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2000], 68–60; The king asks, since we are made in the likeness of God, why can we not do as he does? Sydrac responds: God truly made us in his likeness, and because of this, he gave us lordship over all other creatures that he made and that all should do us reverence and be under our rule. And from this very likeness we know the things that are and were and will be, and we also know good and evil and we know how to labor and work and earn and live, and also we know all other things and all other creatures work and labor in our service).

16. Augustine, *City of God*, I.20. See chapter 3 for further discussion.

family.¹⁷ For its part, *Sidrak* explains:

He made him [that is, humanity] lord of alle þise
 Hem to putte in his seruise
 And forto vse hem to his fode.
 For God made alle þinges gode
 And sithen he ȝaf hem leue þertil,
 He doth no synne, me þinke by skil,
 þat of alle þinges eteth
 In mesure as he it geteth.
 For what he etep wiþ good wille,
 It may neuere do him ille,
 þogh it were addre or snake. (6779–89)

He made humanity lord of all this to put them in his service and to use them as food. For God made all things good, and since he gave them permission to use them, no one sins, I think for this good reason, who eats in moderation whatever he obtains. For whatever he eats with good will never do harm to him, even though it were an adder or a snake.

Sidrak's injunction that humans should eat "wiþ good wille" recalls a Christian limitation on meat-eating repeated at least since Augustine, namely that one must eat with gratitude and proper regard for one's creator.

17. For a few of Bede's inheritors, see Gregory the Great, *Moralia* 21.15, *PL* 76: 203C–204A, and Jonas of Orleans, *De institutione laici* 2.22, *PL* 106:213D. Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, a twelfth-century doctrinal compendium surviving in more than 800 manuscripts, sees meat-eating as a concession to human weakness and the weakness of the world more generally: "ferunt enim vigorem terre ac fecunditatem longe inferiorem esse post diluvium. Unde esus carnum homini concessus est post diluvium, cum antea fructibus terre victitaret" (for they say that the vigor and fertility of the soil were greatly reduced after the Flood, for which reason the eating of meat was granted to mankind after the flood, when before he had lived on the fruits of the earth; *PL* 198: 1082C). For another, earlier expression of this widespread opinion, see Alcuin of York's *Opusculum Primum*, which poses questions and provides answers to a number of doctrinal cruxes: "*Inter*. Cur esus carnum post diluvium homini conceditur et non ante? *Resp.* Propter infecunditatem terrae, ut aestimatur, et hominis fragilitatem" (*Question*: "Why was the eating of meat allowed to humanity after the flood and not before?" *Response*: "Because of the infertility of the earth, as is thought, and the fragility of humanity"; *PL* 100:516C). Although humans may have been vegetarian before the Flood, they still dominated animals; e.g., the *Historia scholastica* on Lamech's accidental killing of Cain while hunting, which explains that Lamech hunted "pro delectatione tantum, et usu pellium, quia non erat usus carnum ante diluvium" (only for pleasure, and for the use of the hides, since flesh was not used before the Flood; *PL* 198: 1079C). For further discussion, see Jack Pearl Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 110–19.

No thought is to be spared for the animal, except insofar as the animal's death reaffirms the human relationship to God. The range of God-given killing and eating includes even poisonous serpents, which suggests the legitimacy of eating any animal, no matter how repugnant or dangerous. When *Sidrak* later reviews the question from a medical, rather than moral, perspective (10431–45), it does restrict the diets of sick people, but only for the duration of their illness. Once again, so long as the meat is eaten in moderation, and so long as the eater is in good health, all “was for manis mete / And al is holsom for to ete” (all was [made] for food for man, and all is wholesome for eating; 10435–36) and “to his kynde noon outrage make” (will not harm his nature; 10438), which is to say, it could harm humans *morally* if they ate it with the wrong intention. *Sidrak*'s commitment to virtually unlimited consumption of animals contrasts, for example, with the dietetic analysis of Hildegard of Bingen's *Physica*, which catalogs animals, considers their edibility, and denies those with noxious flesh—piglets, crows, and horses, among others—to human eaters.¹⁸ Although *Sidrak*'s catalog of monstrous races and foreign rites implicitly condemns the human consumption of dogs and cats (3874), nowhere does it address the Christian proscriptions of hippophagy, and the two entries on human meat-eating explicitly forbid humans no meat. Furthermore, these entries ignore the Christian cycles of fasting, which were well developed by the time of *Sidrak*'s composition and whose proscription of many animal products for nearly a third of the year would seem to invite explanation in a work so given to moral and naturalistic explanations.¹⁹ By omitting these

18. The sick should eat piglets, but only until their health returns (*PL* 197: 1326A). The flesh of crows is unhealthy for humans because the crow is a natural thief (*PL* 197: 1298C); horseflesh is unhealthy because the flesh of nonruminating animals is more difficult to digest than that of ruminates (*PL* 197: 1319B–C). Although Hildegard denies the flesh of certain animals to health-conscious human eaters, she never questions the right of humans to slaughter animals for food: she does not so much spare certain animals as reject them. For possible background for the medical tradition in which Hildegard was working, see Dianne M. Bazell, “De esu carnum: Amald of Villanova's Defence of Carthusian Abstinence,” *Arxiu de textos catalans antics* 14 (1995): 234–37.

19. For seasonal Christian abstinence from meat, see Bruno Laurioux, *Manger au Moyen Âge: pratiques et discours alimentaires en Europe aux XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris: Hachette, 2002), 103–13; and Bernard Chevalier, “L'alimentation carnée à la fin du XVe siècle: réalité et symboles,” in *Pratiques et discours alimentaires à la Renaissance: actes du colloque de Tours de mars 1979*, ed. Jean Claude Margolin and Robert Sauzet (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1982), 193–94. *Sidrak*'s silence on this may be contrasted with the *Speculum sacerdotale*, a fifteenth-century work that explains that Lent forbids the eating of terrestrial animals but allows the eating of fish because God cursed the earth and not the water (Edward H. Weatherly, ed., *Speculum Sacerdotale*, EETS o. s. 200 [London: Oxford University Press, 1936], 53); the *Speculum* perhaps draws on a source such as Alcuin, *Quaestiones in Genesim*, *PL* 100: 518B. *Sidrak* might have taken stock of local Lenten custom, which may have al-

considerations, *Sidrak* represents human dominance over animals as unlimited, and thus rejects any infringement upon that dominance that might hamper its enactment or that would question the preeminence—and hence the existence—of the human subject.

Per the Augustinian tautology, the routine slaughter and consumption of animals by humans sufficiently demonstrates animal irrationality. However, as if unsure of the justness of slaughter and indeed of the general human domination of animals, *Sidrak* repeatedly emphasizes that animals lack selfhood, responsibility, and language. Joining in a longstanding tradition of encomia for dogs, *Sidrak* states that the dog is the “wittiest” beast (6959) but qualifies its admiration with the observation that there is “noon [other animal] kyndelokere to man” (no other animal more beneficent to man; 6962),²⁰ for in *Sidrak*, dogs devote their intelligence entirely to hunting on their masters’ behalf. Elsewhere, it characterizes certain animals—apes, bears, and hounds—as having more understanding than other beasts, but only insofar as it makes them more receptive to human instruction (11453–66). Similarly, when *Sidrak* considers whether “Fisshes and foules and beestis echoone, / Haue þei soules or haue þei none?” (fish and birds and beasts have souls or not; 3633–34), it answers:

no good kunne þei do
But þat men hem norissheþ to—
þanne haue þei witte of manis lerninge
But of hemself haue þei noþinge. (3655–58)

They can do no good except for what men train them to do; they have their knowledge because of man’s learning, but of themselves they have nothing.

Animals can earn neither praise nor scorn by their assistance to humans, since anything admirable in an animal comes from human training. There is therefore no such thing as animal responsibility. Without responsibil-

lowed such surprising “fish” as newborn rabbits (Esther Pascua, “From Forest to Farm and Town: Domestic Animals from ca. 1000 to ca. 1450,” in Brigitte Resl, ed., *A Cultural History of Animals in the Medieval Age* [Oxford: Berg, 2007], 95) and beaver tails (Laurieux, *Manger*, 115), because they were associated with the element of water, and even barnacle geese, since these fowl were thought to hatch from barnacles (Maaïke van der Lugt, “Animal légendaire et discours savant médiéval: la barnacle dans tous ses états,” *Micrologus* 8 [2000]: 351–93). It may be that *Sidrak* omits discussion of Lent simply because the encyclopedia’s interlocutors lived before Christ (*Sidrak* speaks of Christ in the future tense) and hence before Christian alimentary codes.

20. The observation that the dog is the wittiest beast occurs only in the Laud manuscript of *Sidrak*.

ity, animals cannot accrue merit through “almesdede” (good deeds) that would enable them to be, like humans, resurrected into Heaven, fit to be the companions of angels (3635–38). Even if animals could accrue merit, it would die with their bodies: while animals have a kind of soul that moves their bodies and senses things, animal souls, unlike immortal human souls, do not transcend or outlast their bodies.²¹ The animal soul is merely an “oonde,” a breath:

But her soule, þat I oonde calle,
 Whanne þe body is deed, shal falle:
 It fereþ as an onde of thi mouth
 For it is to no man kouth;
 For whan þe word is out spoken
 And þe soun away is copen,
 It vanissheþ in þe eir away
 And no lenger it dure may. (3661–68)

But their soul, which I call a breath, when the body is dead, shall die: it fares as does a breath from your mouth, for it is known to no man; for when the word is spoken out, and the sound creeps away, it vanishes into the air, and may endure no longer.

By analogizing the animal soul to speech, *Sidrak* seems to grant animals precisely what, as irrational brutes, they should lack: language. It does so, however, only to deliver animals more surely to mortality, for in this passage spoken language, being evanescent, lacks any claim to perpetuity in the textual networks in which *Sidrak* itself participates. Elsewhere *Sidrak* altogether denies animals language: it wonders “Haue foules and beestes any speking / Or vnderstanding of anyþing?” and observes that “foules and beestis criēþ, bydene” and “Whanne þat oone make a cry, / Þat other hereþ it redily / And criēþ to him aȝein foot hoot” (do fowls and beasts have speech or understanding of anything . . . fowls and beasts cry out, indeed . . . when one cries out, the others hear it and return the cry immediately; 11339–53). *Sidrak* forestalls the possibilities that it has raised, here and elsewhere, by dismissing all animal “speking” (speaking) as mere noise:²² animals do

21. For further discussion of the mortality or immortality of animals souls, see chapter 3.

22. For a survey of medieval considerations of animal language, see Umberto Eco, Roberto Lambertini, Costantino Marmo, and Andrea Tabarroni, “On Animal Language in the Medieval Classification of Signs,” in Umberto Eco and Costantino Marmo, eds., *On the Medieval Theory of Signs* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1989), 3–41.

make sounds, but “what þei mene þei ne woot” (what they mean they don’t understand; 11354). *Sidrak* makes several points here: animals make noise only by “kinde” and “vsage” (nature and instinct; 11356); this instinctual animal noise lacks meaning, so far as communication between animals is concerned; and the meaninglessness of animal noise has meaning (observe: “what þei mene”), insofar as it demonstrates to humans that animals lack knowledge: “God to hem dighte” (God gave them) this lack of language so that “men shulde haue ouer hem mighte” (men should have might over them; 11357–58). As an interpretable sign of animal irrationality, animal noise justifies human dominance, and animals’ subjugation to this dominance, as in Augustine, demonstrates the uniqueness of both human rationality and human responsibility.

In this, *Sidrak*’s assertions about animal irrationality differ from the commonplace denials of reason to certain human groups so frequent in the history of reason. Although *Sidrak* describes women as suffering from “lightnesse of þe brayn” (lightness of the brain; 10395) compared with men, and treats as a quandary the salvation of human “fooles þat no good ne can / ne no wit haue of man” (fools, who know nothing of good, nor have any human understanding; 9933–34), it does not encourage fully rational men to kill and eat, nor even to enslave, members of either one of these groups; nor does it deny them resurrection. By contrast, *Sidrak*’s proclamations of animal irrationality have everything to do with delivering animals to all human uses and elevating humans exclusively to resurrection: woman may be the symptom of man, but the animal is the symptom of the fear of death. For, as *Sidrak* explains, animals must be denied souls “elles were beest lich to man” (otherwise beasts would be like men; 3646).

While *Sidrak* does not elaborate on what would happen if beasts were like humans, another popular, compendious work from roughly the same period, the *Roman de la Rose*, suggests a possibility. In Jean de Meun’s thirteenth-century continuation of the *Roman*, the allegorical figure of Nature observes that if animals were reasonable, “mal fust aus omes”²³ (it would go badly with men; 17779), just as Aelred of Rievaulx warned in the passage of his *De Anima* that may be Jean’s source text. At the very least, as Jean’s Nature explains, animals might band together in rebellion against human oppression: “jamais li bel destrier crenu / ne se laisseraient donter, / ne chevaliers aus monter” (beautifully maned warhorses would never allow themselves to be broken nor to be mounted by knights; 17800–17802) and “ja chien ne chat nou serviraient, car senz ome bien cheviraient” (no cat

23. Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Roman de la Rose*, ed. Ernest Langlois, vol. 2 (Paris: Firmin, Didot, & Co., 1914).

or dog would ever serve us, since they can get along well without men; 17813–14). Nature goes on to imagine monkeys making armor, writing, and helping other animals in the eternal war against humans. For his part, Aelred proposes:

If sparrows and crows had the dictates of reason to tell them what to do, where to do it, and what precautions to take, how many cities and castles could they not burn down? If they enjoyed reason and were equal to men, could not all the birds and beasts mass together and destroy the human race?²⁴

Nonetheless, even as Aelred and Jean imagine the relationship of humans and animals as fundamentally violent, the threat they invoke is relatively minor compared with that evoked by *Sidrak's* logic. In *Sidrak*, if animals were like humans, if animal objects became subjects of their own lives, then its claims of human specialness among worldly things, supported as they are by the human separation from and domination of animals, would be undone. The problem is not merely whether animals might rise to a status “lich to man,” but rather one of symmetry: to the extent that beasts are like humans, humans are like beasts. Should all creatures meld into an undifferentiated mass, then none could gain salvation, for, as *Sidrak's* answer on God's omnipotence makes clear, salvation requires being singled out.

The human relation to God is, however, one of both exaltation and abasement, but the very abasement further secures the human position over animals and thus the human itself. *Sidrak's* question “Sipen we of Goddis liknesse be, / Whi mowen we not doo as did he?” (Since we have God's likeness, why can't we do as he did?; 2787–88) constructed the human by abasing the animal, and, in so doing, implicitly likened that abasement to that of humans before God. It also conceived of God not primarily as a creator, savior, or font of wisdom or love; it conceived of God primarily as the supreme power: as it says elsewhere, God “is lord and we knaue” (is lord and we are servants; 2811), and if He “wolde bidde hem bothe sinke, / Anoon he shulde do his biddinke” (would bid them [i.e., Heaven and Earth] sink, they would do it immediately; 8119–20). If animals are to humans as humans are to this conception of God, then animals can no more rebel against humans than humans can rebel against God. Nevertheless, the invocation of likeness *and* dominance drives the analogy both ways: the mutual nature of likeness complicates domination's guarantee of difference. *Sidrak*

24. Aelred of Rievaulx, *Dialogue on the Soul*, trans. Charles H. Talbot (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1981), 81.

argued that human domination over animals proved human likeness to God; if humans are to animals as God is to humans, then animals must share a similar relationship, one of likeness, with their immediate masters, as humans do with theirs. This allows humans to repeatedly play the role, so to speak, of the God of Babel or Eden, Genesis 11:6 or 3:22, disquieted because of human threats to his uniqueness, for just as often as *Sidrak* tries to prove human dominion over animals, it also raises and denies the possibility of animal likeness to humans. While it is easy to understand these moments as anxious defenses of the boundary between humans and animals, maintained against animal incursion, they may be better understood as deliberate invocations of likeness to allow for the reenacting of domination. Each paired consideration and rejection of the animal as a possible equal to the human enacts the human once again. *Sidrak's* constant return to animals thus enables the action so important to its concept of the human: humans know themselves as human because animals have “no knowing ne might perto / To do al þing þat we here do” (no knowledge nor any might to do all the things that we do here; 2801–2). Subjugation is the chief of these actions.

Mary Midgley's *Animals and Why They Matter* relates a story that illustrates this self-forming dynamic of comparison and rejection: a hunter on safari takes great pride in prolonging the death of an elephant, going so far as to take a coffee break between shots. As Midgley remarks:

Sane people do not usually congratulate themselves in this way if they have merely smashed a machine or a plastic toy, or even blown up an enormous boulder. They choose a large animal because they can think of it, not just as an obstacle, but as an *opponent*—a being like themselves having its own emotions and interest.²⁵

So too in *Sidrak*, which cannot help but present the human as a structural position rather than as an essence. It differentially produces the human through repeated assertions that God created animals for the sake of humans and through denials of animal-human likeness. To create the opportunity for such denials, *Sidrak* must constantly raise the possibility of just this likeness, so preserving the minimal threat required for a denial to have any force.²⁶ The force of this denial, however, can work only so well. Derrida

25. Mary Midgley, *Animals and Why They Matter* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984), 16.

26. Such arguments are not uncommon; for example, see Susan Schibanoff, “Worlds Apart: Orientalism, Antifeminism, and Heresy in Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*,” *Exemplaria* 8 (1996): 64, which draws on Jonathan Dollimore's *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde*,

remarked of the subject that “Not to be able to stabilize itself *absolutely* would mean to be able *only* to be stabilizing itself”:²⁷ in *Sidrak* the human requires a continual reenactment of subjugation to attempt a stabilization it can never attain. At the same time, if the impossible were achieved, if in this world the human arrived at some final certainty—or if, as I suggest in my epilogue, it gave up on domination—it would cease to be human. In order for humans to enact their dominance and therefore to try to establish themselves as human, animals must continue to be a threat. Dominance, and therefore the human, must fail where there is no suitable object to be dominated: the “beest” must be recognized as some way “lich to man” to allow a meaningful denial of likeness and for domination to be proven and thus for the human continually, ineptly to make itself human.

II.

The Reasonable Body

Sidrak arbitrarily draws distinctions between humans and animals: it can do no more than declare that animals lack language, reason, responsibility, and immortal souls. The many medieval arguments that compare human to animal bodies may seem to offer more secure grounds for asserting human difference. However, a commonplace of critical theory holds that the body arrives to the understanding always already discursive. Traditional medieval comparisons between human and animal bodies do not possess more solidity than traditional medieval comparisons between human and animal reason; rather, in the comparisons, rhetoric only pretends to solidity, or indeed not to exist at all, by lodging or hiding itself in bodies.²⁸ In the corporeal tradition, those traits that supposedly distinguish human from bestial bodies—bipedalism and the possession of hands—also proclaim or even, in some articulations of the tradition, enable the human possession

Freud to Foucault (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) to explain that the “rhetoric of proximity” “ultimately serves the monitory purpose of displaying evil’s disturbing likeness to good; it sounds the alarm, so to speak, that mobilizes the faithful to repel evil into a clearly delimited position as Other. The rhetoric of proximity thus plays an indispensable role in maintaining rigid binary oppositions by temporarily destabilizing them.”

27. Derrida, “Eating Well,” 270. Original emphasis.

28. For a convenient summary of constructivist positions on bodies, see Masha Raskolnikov, *Body Against Soul: Gender and Sowlehele in Middle English Allegory* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2009), 26–27.

of reason, with all this implies about human supremacy. Ovid's description of Prometheus's creation of humans in the *Metamorphoses* is a *locus classicus* for this corporeal tradition in the Middle Ages. Prometheus makes humans "into a shape not unlike that of the god. / But one way or another, man arose—erect, / Standing tall as the other beasts do not, with our faces / set not to gaze down at the dirt beneath our feet / but upward toward the sky" (1.79–83).²⁹ These verses were quoted, glossed, or echoed in sentiment repeatedly, among other places, in exegetical discussions of the precise ways in which God made humans in his image and likeness.³⁰ Each time, the verses support the argument that the upright human form both allows and reminds humans to direct their eyes away from mundane desires and toward the heavens. As for animals, the tradition characterizes their bodies as prone to the ground and their eyes directed only at their food, which evidences animals' merely terrestrial appetites and irrationality. A typical example of the argumentative tradition appears in a late-twelfth-century moral treatise, the *Verbum Abbreviatum* of Peter the Chanter, a cleric affiliated with Paris's Notre Dame. Peter quotes the Ovidian maxim and supplements it with models from standard monastic hagiography:

Unde et B. Martinus oculis ac manibus semper in coelum intentus, etc. Paulus primus eremita ab Antonio inventus est erectus, et quasi orans mortuus. Vincentius in tormento, semper erectis luminibus aspiciebat in coelum. (PL 205: 265C)

For which reason the Blessed St. Martin always strained his eyes and hands to heaven, etc. Paul, the first hermit, was found dead by Anthony, and upright as if praying. Vincent, while in torment, always looked up at heaven with his upraised eyes.

29. Ovid, *The Metamorphoses*, trans. David Slavitt (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1994). Despite the widespread use of the sentiments expressed in this passage, many medieval commentaries on *The Metamorphoses* say nothing about it, likely because they tended to focus on the poem's narrative to the exclusion of the more theoretical passages. However, Cornelius de Boer, ed., *Ovide Moralisé*, 5 vols. (Amsterdam: Johannes Müller, 1915), book 1, 432–51, does include the usual material of the corporeal tradition: humans look upon the sky, animals at the ground; beasts can think of nothing except feeding themselves, whereas humans can concentrate on how to save their souls, the "mestresse et dame" of their bodies, for paradise. The other *locus classicus* for this insight is the exegesis of Psalm 48:21, "Man when he was in honor did not understand: he hath been compared to senseless beasts, and made like to them." Cassiodorus's commentary on the Psalms, PL 70: 344D–345A, furnishes a typical interpretation.

30. Dahan, "Exégèse Genesis 1, 26," 139.

According to Peter, since such saintly postures are the ideal human postures, any human who concentrates on earthly matters spurns both the rational birthright and—as the tradition more or less explicitly asserts—human supremacy over animals. For example, the *Sentences* commentary of Robert of Melun observes that the upright human form signifies that humankind “*praeter cetera animantia rectum habet*”³¹ (has rulership over other living things). Peter the Chanter himself, in his *On Penitence and Its Parts*, provides a more complex version of this aspect of the tradition when he explains why the devout should kneel to pray:

Una est quod ad memoriam reducimus quo modo in paradiso cum angelis stetimus; nunc inter bruta animalia in terra iacemus et animam nostram corporali mole in terra deprimi ingessimus. Alia vero causa est, quia ille qui stat erectus aliis omnibus coequatur. Postquam vero in carnis desideria cecidimus; cum bestiis quasi inrationabilibus in luto reperimus.³²

One reason is that we are led back to the memory that we lately stood in paradise with the angels; now we lie among brute creatures on the earth and we bear our soul, weighed down by corporeal bulk on the earth. Another reason is that he who stands upright is equal to all others. After paradise we fall into carnal desires; we find ourselves in the mud with the beasts as if we were irrational beings.

Peter identifies kneeling with the characteristic bodily form of beasts but also with human submission, primarily to God but also, implicitly, to any human to whom deference is owed. The standing position signals the prelapsarian condition of humans, proper thinking, and two additional elements: equality, when all parties are standing, and dominance, when only one is. Paradoxically, Peter argues that even, or perhaps especially, in kneeling, humans recall their innate superiority, because kneeling is only a temporary state for humans. It signifies the fallen state of all humans, to be redeemed for all good Christians in the afterlife; the posture befits those who ritually abase themselves; however, a human who kneels only dons a bestial, submissive posture. Beasts, being unable to doff their lowly

31. Cited from Richard Heinzmann, *Die Unsterblichkeit der Seele und die Auferstehung des Leibes: eine problemgeschichtliche Untersuchung der fröhscholastischen Sentenzen- und Summenliteratur von Anselm von Laon bis Wilhelm von Auxerre* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1965), 86.

32. Peter the Chanter, *The Christian at Prayer: An Illustrated Prayer Manual Attributed to Peter the Chanter (d. 1197)*, ed. Richard C. Trexler (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1987), 234.

posture, in either this world or the next, cannot help but manifest their inferiority and subjugation to humans.

Many additional examples of this corporeal tradition could be cited,³³ including one from Jacques de Vitry's exempla, in which a she-wolf stole several human children to raise them as its own. One children tried to stand, but the wolf "pede percutit eum in capite nec permittit ut se erigat sed cum pedibus ac manibus bestialiter eat" (struck him on the head with her paw, and would not allow him to walk except bestially, on his hands and feet).³⁴ The wolf wishes to raise an animal, but the human form resists, impelling the child towards its reasoning inheritance. The tradition, here as elsewhere, tends to present bodies and their associated capabilities as either human or animal: humans are inherently upright, reasonable, and mighty, and animals are inherently prone, irrational, and dominated. This fundamental, natural division dissolves when the tradition challenges itself by considering marginal cases. As I will argue, in these challenges, the tradition ceases to present different corporeal forms as naturally and indissolubly connected with particular identities or selves. Revealing its dehumanizing logic through the challenges, the tradition presents different bodies as activating different forces or capabilities, available to anyone or anything living through any given form.³⁵ Humans whose bodies diverge from the stereotypical "human" bodies of the tradition by not allowing them

33. For example, Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De rerum proprietatibus*, 48, who cites the Ovidian maxim and explains, "homo itaque coelum quaerat, & non tanquam pecus ventri obediens, mentum in terra figat" (and so man strives for heaven, and is not like livestock obeying its stomach, with a mind fixed on the earth). Late medieval versions of this topos can be found in John Lydgate, *Reson and Sensuallyte*, ed. Ernst Sieper, 2 vols., EETS e. s. 84 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1901), lines 393–406, as well as the mid-fifteenth-century Latin morality play (whose closest analogue in overall structure and theme is the far better known *Castle of Perseverance*) by the academic Thomas Chaundler, *Liber apologeticus de omni statu humanae naturae. A Defence of Human Nature in Every State (c. 1460): A Moral Play*, ed. and trans. Doris Enright-Clark Shoukri (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1974), 58–59; for further examples, see 173–75n8. For examples from the Latin classics, see Augustine, *Literal Commentary*, vol. I, 266n53, and for still further examples, looking back to Plato and Xenophon, see Nemesius of Emesa, *On the Nature of Man*, trans. R. W. Sharples and P. J. van der Eijk (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008), 48n238, or, for that matter, Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1989), 46–47n1, where "the fateful process of civilization would thus have set in with man's adoption of an erect posture."

34. Jacques de Vitry, *The Exempla or Illustrative Stories from the Sermones Vulgares of Jacques de Vitry*, ed. and trans. Thomas Frederick Crane (London: David Nutt, 1890), 78; translation, 209.

35. The following section exploits a brief comment in Yamamoto, *Boundaries*, 8: "If men stand upright and beasts crawl on all fours, what are we to make of a man who copies a beast's posture?"

to gaze at the heavens or to walk upright without assistance would seem to be the place to begin investigation into the challenge of marginal cases, but I have encountered no example of the tradition specifically considering such forms.³⁶ Gerald of Wales may, however, have had the tradition in mind in his characterization of the incestuous, adulterous Irish as tending towards blindness, lameness, and other bodily defects. As he concludes, “Et digna Dei vindicta videtur, ut qui interiore mentis lumine ad ipsum non respiciunt, hi exterioris et corporeae lucis plerumque doleant destituti” (it seems a just punishment from God that those who do not look to him with the interior light of the mind should often grieve in being deprived of the light that is bodily and external).³⁷ A peculiar discussion in the *Physics of the Human Body*, by the twelfth-century Benedictine Abbot William of St. Thierry, nonetheless comes closer than Gerald does to directly considering the problem of human disability by hypothesizing about naturally helpless humans. That this speculation occurs in the section of his work concerned with the human soul only underscores the connection—whether causal or merely evidentiary—William draws between bodily form and spiritual capacities. William’s hypothesis at once reaffirms the corporeal tradition and clarifies its logic by presenting the animal form as if it were essentially disabled:

All the beasts have feet where men have hands. Although nature has given man hands for many life functions in war and in peace, yet before all it is for this: if man had no hands his mouth would have to be fashioned like those of quadrupeds so he could take food from the ground. The length of his neck would have to be increased, his nose shaped like that of a brute animal. He would have to have heavy lips, thick, coarse and projecting, suited to cutting fodder. The fleshy part around the teeth would have to be solid and rough, as in dogs and other animals that eat meat. Thus if hands

36. For example, “Medieval Theoretical Concepts of the (Impaired) Body,” chapter 3 of Irina Metzler, *Disability in Medieval Europe: Thinking about Physical Impairment during the High Middle Ages, c. 1100–1400* (New York: Routledge, 2006), concentrates on scriptural background, resurrection theology, and theories of ugliness, among other topics, but not on the stereotypical human body’s distinction from animal bodies.

37. Gerald of Wales, *Topographia hibernica, et Expugnatio hibernica*, ed. James Francis Dimock (London: Longman, 1867), 182. This is the second recension; for the earlier version, which differs only minimally (“corporee lucis beneficio plerumque doleant destituti”), see Gerald of Wales, “Giraldus Cambrensis in Topographia Hibernie: Text of the First Recension,” ed. John J. O’Meara, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 52 (1949): 172. I have relied on the translation of the first recension from Gerald of Wales, *The History and Topography of Ireland*, rev. trans. John Joseph O’Meara (London: Penguin, 1982), 118. I thank Richard Godden for recommending this passage to me.

had not been provided for the body, an articulated and modulated voice could not exist. Man would have to bleat or low or bark or make some other kind of animal noise. But now, with the hand serving the mouth, the mouth serves reason and through it the intellectual soul which is spiritual and incorporeal. This is something not shared with irrational animals.³⁸

If they were handless, humans would have to eat like quadrupeds, which would cause them to lose the ability to speak and, as he goes on to say, to write.³⁹ Since the human voice would become a mere “oonde,” a bleat or low or bark, it could no longer even be written: according to a longstanding grammatical formulation, echoed in William’s discussion, and stated succinctly in Marius Victorinus’s fourth-century *Ars Grammatica*:

vocis formae sunt duae, articulata et confusa. Articulata est quae audita intellegitur et scribitur et ideo a plerisque explanata, a nonnullis intellegibilis dicitur. . . . Confusa autem est quae nihil aliud quam simplicem vocis sonum emittit, ut est equi hinnitus, anguis sibilus, plausus, stridor et cetera his similia.⁴⁰

There are two forms of the voice, articulated and indistinct. The articulated is that which, when heard, is understood and written and therefore explained to many and is said to be understandable to many. . . . The indistinct however is that which is nothing but the single sound of a voice cast

38. McGinn, *Treatises*, II.2, 131. William draws on the fourth-century bishop Gregory of Nyssa’s *De Opificio Hominis* (*On the Making of Man*), VIII.8, via Eriugena’s Latin translation of Gregory’s Greek. For a later articulation of this point, see Aquinas, *ST* 1, q. 91, a. 3, “Whether the body of man was given an apt disposition,” reply objection 3, “if man’s stature were prone to the ground, and he used his hands as fore-feet, he would be obliged to take hold of his food with his mouth. Thus he would have a protruding mouth, with thick and hard lips, and also a hard tongue, so as to keep it from being hurt by exterior things; as we see in other animals. Moreover, such an attitude would quite hinder speech, which is reason’s proper operation.” Note that arguments such as these may explain the romance *Guillaume de Palerne*’s emphasis that, even while going about on all fours while disguised as bears, Guillaume and his beloved Melior still eat with their hands; see Leslie Sconduto, trans., *Guillaume de Palerne* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2004), 3319–28.

39. McGinn, *Treatises*, II.4, 132.

40. Marius Victorinus, *Ars Grammatica*, ed. Italo Mariotti (Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1967), II.2–4, 66. For one peculiar example of this tradition, see the protests of a tenth-century Cluniac monk against his order’s new imitation of the silence of angels: “God did not make me a serpent, so that I should hiss at you, nor did he make me an ox, so that I should bellow, but he made me a man and gave me a tongue so that I might speak!”; from John of Salerno, *The Life of Odo of Cluny*, 2.23, *PL* 133:74A, quoted and translated in Scott G. Bruce, *Silence and Sign Language in Medieval Monasticism: The Cluniac Tradition*, c. 900–1200 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 50.

out, as is the neighing of a horse, or the hissing of a snake, or clapping, hissing, or other such things.

Thus, to be without hands would force humans to graze with eyes downcast, cut off entirely from documentary culture and from being recognized as humans. Deprived of the ability to raise their eyes and thoughts to heaven, handless humans would even lack the ability to think as humans should. They would be indistinguishable from animals. Yet it must be recognized that William's departure from the usual paths of the corporeal tradition has led him back to agreement with it: by William's reasoning, the host of capacities unique to rational creatures requires a certain bodily form; animals lack this form, and therefore must lack these capacities.

William limits his consideration to hypothetical humans who lack the proper upright form, while other examples of the tradition consider degraded humans, bipedal animals, and even monsters, all of which scandalize the tradition by improperly wielding the bodily form that supposedly unites reason and dominance. The thirteenth-century anti-peasant polemic "Le Despit au vilain"⁴¹ recommends that peasants should "manoir en bos, / et ester de séu enclose" (live in the woods and be enclosed in a sty), be forbidden to eat beef, and "mangier chardons / roinsces, espines, et estrain" (eat thistles, / brambles, thorns, and straw). It is not enough for the "Despit" to reduce peasants to animal shelter or herbivorous diets, for it then demands that peasants "pester herbe avoec les bues cornus, / a iiij. piez alez toz nus" (pasture on grass with the horned cows on all fours, entirely naked). This poem is as clear an illustration as one could hope for of Cary Wolfe's observation that "as long as it is institutionally taken for granted that it is all right to systemically exploit and kill nonhuman animals simply because of their species, then the humanist discourse of species will always be available for use by some humans against other humans as well."⁴² To keep dominant humans distinct from dominated humans and to

41. Achille Jubinal, ed., *Jongleurs et trouvères; ou, Choix de saluts, épîtres, rêveries et autres pièces légères des XIIIe et XIVe siècles* (Paris: J. A. Merklein, 1835), 107–9. To my knowledge, the poem has not been edited since. It appears in BN fr. 837, f. 233, a late-thirteenth-century manuscript famous for its collection of fabliaux, reproduced in facsimile as Henri Omont, *Fabliaux dits et contes en vers français du XIIIe siècle: facsimilé du manuscrit français 837 de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris: Leroux, 1932). For more on the exclusion of peasants from humanity in medieval literature, see Herman Braet, "'A Thing Most Brutish': The Image of the Rustic in Old French Literature," in *Agriculture in the Middle Ages: Technology, Practice, and Representation*, ed. Del Sweeney (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 194–95; at 203 n48, Braet cites an early-twelfth-century Latin poet who characterizes peasants as livestock: "rustici qui pecudes possunt appellari."

42. Wolfe, *Animal Rites*, 8.

set aright the wavering logic of the corporeal tradition, the “Despit” advocates a kind of sumptuary law directed at posture itself. Peasants, being so dominated, should cease to muddle the distinction between themselves and their betters by abandoning their illegitimate possession of the posture of dominance.

If the bipedality of peasants affronts the logic of the corporeal tradition, it does so only minimally: peasants, even if subject to dehumanizing insults, are generally recognized and treated as humans. Their lords would only metaphorically kill and eat them, and no one seriously doubted that peasants would eventually find a place in the afterlife. Bipedal animals pose a far stronger challenge to the corporeal tradition simply because there is no conceptual space for them in a tradition that presents the animal form as quadrupedal. Moreover, while the corporeal tradition only occasionally argues that the upright bodily form signifies or enables worldly dominance, it always argues that this form signifies or enables reason. A telling response to the challenge of animal bipedalism appears in *Ci nous dit*, an early-fourteenth-century compendium of exempla and doctrine. First, it restates the familiar relationship between human form and reason:

Les bestes vont à .IIII. piés en senefiant qu’il sunt en leur païz; et nous alons a .II. en senefiant que nous ne sommes pas ou nostre. . . . Et quiconques met l’amour de son cuer en terre, ainsi se fait il semblans aus bestes; maiz devons avoir tous nous desiriers ou ciel, que pour ce nous a Diex faiz.⁴³

Beasts go on four feet to show that they are in their country; and we go on two to show that we are not in ours. . . . And whoever puts the love of his heart in the world makes himself resemble beasts; but we ought to have all of our desire in heaven, which is what God made us for.

It then immediately turns to the problem of “cinges et pluseurs bestes” (monkeys and several [other types of] beasts), which “soivent bien aler a .II. piès” (often go on two feet). *Ci nous dit* manages to defend the corporeal tradition by declaring “si n’i vont pas volentiers s’il n’en sont contraint, pour ce qu’il n’ont pas sens raisonnable” (but they do not walk that way willingly if they are not compelled to, because they are not reasonable). *Ci nous dit* thus restores the ambiguous body of the monkey to its proper, irrational place by subordinating it to human dominance: if monkeys walk erect only under compulsion, then their intermittent occupancy

43. Gérard Blangez, ed., *Ci nous dit: recueil d’exemples moraux*, vol. 1 (Paris: Société des anciens textes français, 1979), 36–37.

of the posture of reason in fact shows them at their most dominated, that is, at their most animal. Correspondingly, the argument produces human posture and reason as authentic, reassuring humans that their upright posture is a free choice, at once representative of and enabling their refusal to lead a bestial life. The bear pictured in an early-twelfth-century copy of Jerome's Biblical Commentaries (Trinity College, Cambridge, MS 0.4.7, fol. 75r) functions similarly: the bear stands upright, and even speaks the letter A. Yet its speech only imitates that of the figure standing to its left, its human master, who surpasses his pupil by speaking "ABC," and who compels with a cudgel both the bear's standing and its speech.⁴⁴

Monsters cannot be as readily classified as either clearly irrational or rational. As Jeffrey Jerome Cohen observed, among the symbolic functions of the monster is to refuse "to participate in the classificatory 'order of things,'" to be a form "suspended between forms that threatens to smash distinctions,"⁴⁵ whereas the symbolic function of the animal is primarily to reassure humans of their fundamental difference from other kinds of living things. The corporeal tradition tends to silently bypass the problem of monsters, many of which are hybrids of human and animal forms. A rare direct engagement occurs in Thomas of Cantimpré's mid-thirteenth-century encyclopedia, the *Liber de natura rerum*. The tradition does not emerge unscathed from its teratological dalliance, for, by the time Thomas concludes his argument, he has contradicted himself and exposed the corporeal tradition's typically unexpressed, dehumanizing logic. The section on the human body, which considers the relationship between various body parts and the human as such, tends to adhere to traditional interpretations of the characteristic human form. Its entry on the hand is typical:

44. Reproduced in Lisa Kiser, "Animals in Medieval Sports, Entertainment, and Menageries," in Resl, *A Cultural History of Animals*, 122. For a similar image, in another early-twelfth-century English manuscript, now Vatican Library, Rossiana MS 500, f. 148, see figure 7 in Laura Cleaver, "Taming the Beast: Images of Trained Bears in Twelfth-Century English Manuscripts," *IKON* 2 (2009): 243–52. For an allied reading of mimetic simians, see Cary Wolfe, *Animal Rites*, 184, which, in discussing the apes of Michael Crichton's *Congo*, draws on Michael Taussig and Homi Bhabha to observe that "the animal other is accorded impressive mimetic prowess, only to have it immediately put to the service of a mechanical obedience whose most famous name in the philosophical tradition . . . is Descartes."

45. "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)," in *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 6. John Block Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1981) remains the standard English treatment on medieval teratology, but also see Claude Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1999).

Manus in homine loco pedum anteriorum naturaliter create sunt, ut dicit Aristotiles, quoniam homo maioris intellectus est omnibus animalibus et maiores ingenii, et ideo, habet maius instrumentum motionibus et operationibus multis.⁴⁶

Hands were naturally created for man in place of the front feet, as Aristotle says, since man is more intelligent than all animals and more crafty, and therefore, he has a greater instrument for movements and doing many activities.

Hands do not cause uniquely human qualities; rather, God gave humans hands so that they might fully express their rationality. Thomas's implicit argument is that handless creatures lack hands because they do not need to do as much as humans do, nor are they as intelligent.⁴⁷ However, in the section "De monstruosis hominibus orientis"⁴⁸ (the monstrous humans of the East), significantly located between sections on the human soul and on animals, Thomas considers aberrations from the ideal human form. Although the section's title itself acknowledges the humanity of these creatures, Thomas devotes its preface to contradicting just that point. First, he asserts that no monster could be descended from Adam. Thomas briefly entertains the possibility that an onocentaur—partly human, partly donkey, a product of bestiality—could be human, but he stifles the challenge, somewhat inadequately, by stating that no such creature could long survive its birth: he notably does not speculate on the perpetuity or destination of the soul of the dead onocentaur infant (or foal). His next approach, more sustained and better considered, sees Thomas partially retell a story from Jerome's *Vita sancti Pauli* in which the hermit Anthony encounters a grunting centaur and a talking satyr (*PL* 23:23A–24B). Thomas omits the centaur, but includes both the satyr and its conversation with Anthony in which it condemns those who worship its race as gods and begs Anthony

46. Thomas of Cantimpré, *Liber de natura rerum: Editio princeps secundum codices manuscriptorum*, ed. Helmut Boese (Berlin: W. De Gruyter, 1973), I.23, 29.

47. Thomas's logic echoes that of, for example, the early-twelfth-century *Second Salernitan Anatomical Demonstration*, which, in a typical passage, states, "each kind of animal has bodily members appropriate to serve its spirit and nature. The lion, for example, since he is of bold and angry spirit, has a body perfected to these qualities and is provided with suitable weapons in the shape of claws upon his feet and very sharp teeth in his mouth"; for the translation, see George Washington Corner, *Anatomical Texts of the Earlier Middle Ages: A Study in the Transmission of Culture with a Revised Latin Text of the Anatomia Cophonis and Translations of Four Texts* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution, 1927), 54.

48. Thomas of Cantimpré, *Liber de natura rerum*, 97. All subsequent references to this preface are to this page.

for a prayer. Thomas finishes the narrative with a paraphrase of Jerome's authenticating claim, "Et ne, inquit Ieronimus, hoc fabulosum quis estimet, nostra etate in Alexandria huiusmodi animal captum est" ("and lest," said Jerome, "this should be thought fabulous, in our era such a creature was captured in Alexandria"). In the original, Jerome identifies the satyr successively as "humunculum," "animal," "bestia," and "homo," as if unable or unwilling to determine whether it possesses a rational soul, but he finally seems to decide in favor of its humanity when Anthony bursts into tears and prays for it. Thomas, less willing than Jerome to tolerate ambiguity, refers to the satyr first as a "monstrum" and then, in the authenticating claim, substitutes "animal" for Jerome's use of "homo." This is his first, subtle exclusion of the satyr from humanity. Thomas might then have followed the example of his master, Albert the Great, by declaring that the satyr, "which on rare occasions walks erect . . . submits to domestication," a judgment which surely recalls the truism that no human can be domesticated.⁴⁹ Thomas instead aims to exclude satyrs and *all* monsters from humanity. He does this by revising Augustine, who wrote in the *City of God*, "Whoever is anywhere born a man, that is, a rational mortal animal, no matter what unusual appearance he presents in color, movement, sound, nor how peculiar he is in some power, part, or quality of his nature, no Christian can doubt that he springs from that one protoplast,"⁵⁰ namely Adam, and is therefore human. By arguing that a rational, mortal creature should be identified as a descendant of Adam no matter what [quamlibet] form it has, Augustine holds open the possibility that any monster might actually be human. Thomas, however, writes that "secundum Augustinum" (according to Augustine), "*neque tantum* forma, sed actus et habitus hominem manifestant" (*not only* form, but also deed and deportment show them to be human; my emphasis). Through this change, Thomas simultaneously rewrites Augustine, contradicts him, and insolently ascribes to Augustine the constrained classificatory system that he substitutes for Augustine's own formulation. Thomas concludes his epitome of Jerome and revision of Augustine's teratology with a flat denial that attempts to altogether erase the "hominibus" of the section's title: "animalibus vero monstruosis animam inesse non credimus" (truly I do not believe that monstrous animals have a soul). With this, Thomas retroactively resists the evangelistic import and taxonomic flexibility of Jerome's story. Regardless of the "deed and

49. Albert the Great, *Man and the Beasts (De animalibus, Books 22–26)*, trans. James J. Scanlan (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1987), 172.

50. Augustine, *City of God*, XVI 8, 531. For the Latin, see Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, ed. Bernhard Dombart, Vol. 2 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1909), 135–36.

deportment” of satyrs, including their resistance to being worshiped as gods—which might be thought to indicate their moral sensibility—and their desire for Christian salvation, they must not be considered human, because, being only partly human-shaped, they fail the initial test of form.

Thomas requires further explanation, however, to fix his argument securely. The satyr not only has hands, the crafty organ suitable only for humans; it also speaks. Simply by writing out the satyr’s words, Thomas would seem to have already admitted it to humanity, since his categorization in *De natura rerum* of types of vox explains, “Omnis autem vox articulata est aut confusa: articulata hominum, confusa animalium. Articulata est, que scribi potest ut a, e; confusa, que scribi non potest ut gemitus infirmorum et voces volucrum aut bestiarum”⁵¹ (all voices are either distinct or indistinct: the human voice is distinct, and animal indistinct. A distinct voice is one that can be written, such as A or E; an indistinct voice is one that cannot be written, such as the moaning of the sick or the voices of birds and beasts). To preserve human distinctiveness against his own earlier taxonomy, he requires an approach more sophisticated than that of the traditional corporeal argument. First he explains that any monster that behaves in characteristically human ways does so only “ad rationis motum sensu estimationis” (because of the estimative sense), a capacity which medieval natural science concocted to explain apparently “reasonable” animal behavior.⁵² The satyr’s words may therefore be only a kind of instinct. He then concludes:

Et non mirum, si monstra huiusmodi alicuius actus habilitatione ceteris animalibus preferantur, quia forte secundum quod plus appropinquat homini exteriori forma in corpore, tanto illi appropinquat sensu estimationis in corde.⁵³

51. Thomas of Cantimpré, *Liber de natura rerum*, 26.

52. For this sense, one of the five internal senses described in Avicenna’s *De Anima*, as discussed and developed by Thomas’s teacher Albert the Great, see Nicholas H. Steneck, “Albert the Great on the Classification and Localization of the Internal Senses,” *Isis* 65 (1974): 193–211; for specific attention to this sense in regard to animals, see Salisbury, *Beast Within*, 6–7, and Marie-Françoise Notz, “La notion de comportement animal et le savoir médiéval: Hildegard de Bingen et Albert le Grand,” in *L’histoire de la connaissance du comportement animal: actes du colloque international* (Liège, 11–14 mars 1992), ed. Liliane Bodson (Liege: University of Liege, 1993), 194–95. In the discussion of animal sense in Pieter de Leemans and Matthew Klemm, “Animals and Anthropology in Medieval Philosophy,” in Resl, *A Cultural History of Animals*, 169–73, it is clear that late-medieval analyses of animal cognition strove less to ascribe capacities to animals than to preserve the uniqueness of human reason and moral responsibility.

53. At least one translation of this observation survives; see the quotation and translation from the Middle Dutch version of Thomas’s *De natura rerum*, *Der naturen bloeme* (The

And no wonder if the abilities of some of these monsters rise above the other animals, since perhaps the more they approach the human outwardly in bodily form, the more they approach [human sense] in the estimative sense in their mind.

His efforts to define monsters as capable only of inauthentically imitating human reason diverges sharply from the usual expressions of the corporeal tradition, in which the human body is as unique to and essentially part of humans as their mental and spiritual capacities. Thomas, like William of St. Thierry, severs this essential connection, William by considering animalized humans, Thomas, in essence, by considering humanized animals. When William imagines handless humans as bestial and reason facilitated by the possession of hands, he presents the human separation from animals as caused by manipulative capacity. Thomas arrives at a similar conclusion when he suggests that certain monsters might seem to be more reasonable because they have a form more conducive to reason. Thomas still preserves a bulwark between humans and animals by granting animals only an estimative sense, but this is a weak defense, maintained only by a logic that imagines monsters as capable of approaching the human form only asymptotically. But Thomas, like William, has already suggested that the rational and dominating human or the irrational and dominated animal are products of corporeal happenstance rather than of qualities innate to humans or animals. William and Thomas thus dehumanize the human body by identifying its characteristics not as essentially human but as technologies that could be enjoyed by whoever, or whatever, possessed them; likewise for the animal body. Stereotypical human or animal forms are no longer the form of humans or animals. The ideas of anthropomorphism or zoomorphism must be jettisoned, for upright creatures possessing hands are not “human-shaped” so much as “shaped appropriately—or nearly appropriately—for reason,” and vice versa. Because satyrs possess elements of the so-called human form, they have some modicum of (inauthentic) speech and reason, whereas humans are fortunate enough to possess the full panoply of corporeal qualities necessary for (authentic) reason: at least, this would be

Flowers of Nature), in Ludo Jongen, “Do Centaurs Have Souls? Centaurs as Seen by the Middle Dutch Poet Jacob von Maerlant,” in L. A. J. R. Houwen, ed., *Animals and the Symbolic in Mediaeval Art and Literature* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1997), 148. On the other hand, the French moralized translation of Thomas’s teratologic catalog omits this observation altogether; see Alfons Hilka, ed., *Eine altfranzösische moralisierende Bearbeitung des Liber de monstruosis hominibus orientis aus Thomas von Cantimpré, De naturis rerum* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1933).

true for humans considered by the dominant discourses to be “complete” in body. This, rather than some innate quality, may be what vaults humans over the estimative sense and into reason.

Thomas has been led to his peculiar solution by his attempt to negotiate a compromise between the corporeal tradition’s two disharmonious goals: to maintain that the shape of the body, whether characteristically human or characteristically animal, means something, and to preserve human distinctiveness. But to arrive at his solution, he must contradict his earlier statements on hands and vox. Thomas could be faulted for his error, but the mistake has its own strength, one perhaps greater than that granted by intellectual coherence, for through the muddled proof Thomas demonstrates that he can include or exclude creatures from the human according to his whim. This whim operates just as forcefully in *Ci nous dit*, where the mental disposition of the monkey matters far less than the human act that confines the monkey to animality. A pertinent joke appears in Diogenes Laertius’s *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. After Plato defines the human as a “two-legged creature without feathers,” the Cynic Diogenes, Plato’s frequent irritant in this work, plucks a chicken, presents it to the Academy, and declares it to be “Plato’s Man,” whereupon Plato eludes the challenge by adding to his definition “having broad nails.”⁵⁴ If Diogenes had persisted in his joke by producing a circus-trained elephant or even a legless human, Plato would presumably have had to retreat from proof by physical form and to reveal his underlying purpose, which is not to find an adequate corporeal definition for humans but to declare humans human and animals animal regardless of evidence, corporeal or otherwise. In excluding the plucked chicken or the trained elephant, Plato would make only a provisional definition of the human, yet he would gain greater assurance of his ability to define what is *not* human. In so doing, although he would evacuate the human of any claim to an essence, he would be able to do what really matters for the human, to put animals in their place.



My presentation of medieval texts as relentlessly pessimistic and anxious in their interaction with what they designate as animal must be tempered by recalling the slipperiness of any category, that, like the monster, the animal—to quote Cohen again—can be “a rebuke to boundary and

54. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. R. D. Hicks (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 43.

enclosure.”⁵⁵ The pessimism must be tempered by expecting that some humans who tarry with the abjected animal will emerge from their sojourn less committed to their humanity. Thomas’s denial of humanity to monsters cannot erase the “hominibus” of his section’s title; this initial designation persists, provoking but confounding all his denials. What if Thomas had stopped trying so hard? In his prologue, Thomas encounters the odd traits, habits, cultures, and bodies of monsters and animals as a threat. Through these encounters, he nervously reassures himself of his humanity, but he might have been inspired to surrender the defense of his humanity and to abandon himself to previously unthought possibilities. Even *Sidrak* does not unrelentingly degrade animals. It awards the cock the title of fairest fowl through criteria that have nothing to do with human needs or even human distinctiveness: the cock’s “crown” and spurs, sense of time, and conjugal jealousy are such advantages that if the cock lived in the wild, all other birds “shulde do him reuerence” (would honor him; 11418). At least within the space of this entry and a few others, *Sidrak* ceases to worry about human supremacy, imagining animal hierarchies and processes wholly unconcerned with human needs or interests and even exceeding all human understanding. When *Sidrak* wonders how birds fly, it answers by considering not the moral significance of bird flight nor by arguing for the inferiority of airborne creatures to creatures formed from the solid earth, but by explaining how flapping wings thicken the air, enabling it to hold aloft a bird’s light body (5285–308). The “eerne” (eagle; 3589) rejuvenates itself by flying “hiȝer þan any man may see” (higher than any man may see; 3593), as if escaping the grasp of human knowledge. The adder might live more than 1,000 years, whereupon it will grow a horn and soon after become a “firy dragoun” (fiery dragon; 3608), thus exceeding human chronological grasp. In these animal encounters, *Sidrak* offers animals to humans not for domination, not even quite for understanding, but for interest and wonder in a world no longer anthropocentric.

Sadly these encounters are only oases amid a textual landscape otherwise blighted by human superiority. Notably, as soon as *Sidrak* concludes its entry on the eagle and adder, its least anthropocentric entry on animals, it insists on the moral legitimacy of humans’ slaughter and consumption of animals. Striking down its own wonderful possibilities, *Sidrak* overwhelmingly supports the human system: it deploys category disruption not to unlock fixed categories—for better or worse—but only to provide opportunities for the human to dominate animals and to repair categories and thus to reassure itself of its existence. Generally speaking, *Sidrak* addresses the

55. Cohen, “Monster Culture,” 7.

animal not because animals are indubitably irrational, but rather because they so usefully resemble rational humans. Jeremy Bentham suggests that “the day may come, when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withhelden from them but by the hand of tyranny.” Bentham rejects appeals to reason for determining rights, arguing that one should ask of animals not “Can they reason? nor, Can they *talk*, but Can they *suffer*?”⁵⁶ In the human system, animals *must* suffer to guarantee humans the opportunity for meaningful domination, by which humans claim exclusive possession of reason, speech, and immortal souls. Generally speaking, no one’s humanity is reassured by destroying a rock. Wild boars, on the other hand, possessed strength, bravery, and vigor against which knights, during the hunt, proved their own ideal possession of the same traits. Other animals, including dogs and predatory birds, were admired for their prowess in hunting. Some animals might even be honored as co-worshippers, as in the Southern German ritual of the *Umrütt*, in which horses were blessed with holy water and ridden into specially designed churches to gaze upon the Host.⁵⁷ But for all this, the domination of animals also requires that animals be scorned, their corpses treated as no human body should be: the boar is eaten, the dog’s corpse left in a ditch, the bird’s on a dung heap, and the horse’s, too, left to rot.⁵⁸ A human death,

56. Angus Taylor’s discussion of Bentham in *Animals and Ethics: An Overview of the Philosophical Debate* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2003), 46–49 (this quotation is on page 47; original emphasis) usefully summarizes his place in animal rights debates.

57. Lionel Rothkrug, “Popular Religion and Holy Shrines: Their Influence on the Origins of the German Reformation and Their Role in German Cultural Development,” in *Religion and the People, 800–1700*, ed. James Obelkevich (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 30, describes the *Umrütt* and contextualizes this ceremony (c.1300 on) within the emancipation of the ministeriales, who cemented their new position through sponsoring pilgrimages, reverence for the Host, and increased persecution of the Jews.

58. For example, the citizens of late medieval London used a place called “Houndsditch” beyond the city limits as a dumping place for refuse, including dead dogs (Ernest L. Sabine, “Butchering in Mediaeval London,” *Speculum* 8 [1933]: 351). A sermon in Woodburn O. Ross, ed., *Middle English Sermons Edited from British Museum MS Royal 18 B 23*, EETS o. s. 209 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940), 239, observes that “Trewly birdes raueners, when þei die þei be cast away vpon þe myddynges as no þinge of vawle, bot þe birdes þat þei dud þer rauereyn too ben born to lordes tables. Sicurly, on þe same maner is of þise raueners when þat þei die. But iff þat þei amend þei ben throwon owte in-to þe donghull of hell” (Truly raptors, when they die, are thrown out onto dungheaps as valueless things, but the birds that they themselves killed are taken to lords’ tables. Certainly, [it is the same with us] as with these raptors when they die, for unless we amend, we will be thrown out onto the dunghill of Hell). In Lydgate’s “Debate of the Horse, Goose, and Sheep” (*The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, ed. Henry Noble MacCracken, 2 vols., EETS o. s. 192 [Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1934]), the horse’s opponents scorn him because “A ded hors is but a fowle careyn” (204; a dead horse is nothing but a foul carcass) and, in an aggregation of Job 39:19–25 and the *De contemptu mundi* tradition, “Entryng the feeld he pleyeth the leoun;

like human life, merits respect; animal death, for the most part, merits no commemoration. (I must stress *for the most part*, because the exceptions, to which I turn in my epilogue, aspire to better relations than those I have described so far.) Likewise, the expression of likeness and denial in *Sidrak* and other texts continually reforms the human; it provides occasions for the domination of animals, the ongoing action that unceasingly and vainly strives to make the animal animal and the human human.⁵⁹

/ What folwith aftir? his careyn stynkith sore" (entering the field, he plays the lion; what follows after? His carcass stinks terribly; 222–23). Also see Umberto Albarella, "Meat Production and Consumption in Town and Country," in *Town and Country in the Middle Ages: Contrasts, Contacts, and Interconnections, 1100–1500*, ed. Kate Giles and Christopher Dyer (Leeds: Maney, 2005), 139, who suggests that the great number of horse bones in the barbican ditch of Norwich castle indicates that horses' carcasses were dumped there.

59. My point harmonizes with Erica Fudge, *Pets* (Stocksfield: Acumen, 2008), 51, "We humans are constantly anxious about our status and so we do something utterly paradoxical to address this. We construct animals as beings like us in order to show how powerful we are in our control over them and simultaneously we make it appear that our power is natural in that it is given by animals that we have also constructed as instinctive and not rational. In such a narrative, we construct pets as both like us and not like us in order to reinforce and naturalize the fact that we are the only beings that really count in the world, all because we are anxious that that might not be true."

CHAPTER 2



MASTERING VIOLENCE

Like the political organizations that preceded it historically, the state represents a relationship in which people rule over other people. This relationship is based on the legitimate use of force (that is to say, force that is perceived as legitimate). If the state is to survive, those who are ruled over must always acquiesce in the authority that is claimed by the rulers of the day.

—Max Weber, *Politics as a Vocation*¹

I.

The Legitimized Use of Force: Animal Acquiescence

To the question of “Whether it is unlawful to kill any living thing” (*Summa Theologica* 2a2ae q. 64, a. 1), Aquinas unsurprisingly answers yes, explaining that in the natural worldly order “animals use plants, and men use animals, for food.” This system, which concedes no proper conceptual space to carnivorous animals,² has the support of scripture. In Genesis 9, God grants

1. Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures*, ed. David Owen and Tracy B. Strong, trans. Rodney Livingston (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2004), 34.

2. This food pyramid is from Aristotle, *The Politics and The Constitution of Athens*, ed. Stephen Everson, trans. Benjamin Jowett, Jonathan Barnes, rev. 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1256b1, 21: “we may infer that, after the birth of animals, plants exist for their sake, and that the other animals exist for the sake of man, the same for use and food, the wild, if not all, at least the greater part of them, for food, and for the provision of clothing and various instruments. Now, if nature makes nothing incomplete, and nothing in vain, the inference must be that she has made all animals for the sake of man.” Aristotle’s position, however, differs somewhat from that of Aquinas. Wolfgang Kullmann, “Different Concepts of Final Cause in Aristotle,” in *Aristotle on Nature and Living Things*:

only humans the right to eat meat; therefore, as Michael Carroll observes, carnivorous animals are hybrid animals, unclean because they straddle classifications.³ To regard animal carnivorousness as inconceivable or unclean supports the human system, for the animal domination of other animals or even humans, a domination most evident in the conversation of a living animal to edible flesh, might enable animals to enact their own, nonanthropocentric relationships of violence, which would dilute the singular superiority of the human by multiplying nodes of domination.

To be sure, the human system did not concern itself with most animal violence. Those animals outside human zones of control, outside cities, farms, game parks, and so forth, were unregulated, but only until they encountered humans or humans encountered them. An exemplary twelfth-century Norwegian law explains that “bears and wolves are outlawed everywhere, for no man wants to be answerable for their doings,” then adds that once a human hunter encounters a bear, he becomes the designated beneficiary of the bear’s death: in essence, its owner. The hunter also becomes responsible for the bear’s actions until it dies or escapes back into the wild, which is to say, until it slips from human supervision: “If men go to hunt a bear and approaching the lair above the barricade drive the bear out, they shall pay [for damages] if the bear attacks the [farm beasts of other] men; but if he runs out toward the woods, they shall pay nothing.”⁴ Wolves also serve to illustrate this point. Wolves were regarded as a particularly fear-

Philosophical and Historical Studies: Presented to David M. Balme on his Seventieth Birthday, ed. Allan Gotthelf (Pittsburgh, PA: Mathesis, 1985), 169–75, explains that Aristotle’s corpus describes three different kinds of *teloi*. This section of the *Politics* describes the second of these three kinds of *teloi*, in which animals and plants have their own internal *telos* as well as another, merely supplementary *telos*, in this case, of being able to be used by humans.

3. Michael Carroll, “One More Time: Leviticus Revisited,” *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 19 (1978): 343.

4. Laurence Marcellus Larson, trans., *The Earliest Norwegian Laws, Being the Gulathing Law and the Frostathing Law* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935), 103. An early version of such laws in which a hunter claimed an animal by finding it, but also became responsible for damages it caused, can be found in Laws 310, 311, and 314 of the seventh-century *Edicts of the Langobard King Rothari*; see the discussion in Adelheid Krah, “Tiere in den langobardischen und süddeutschen *Leges*,” in *Fauna and Flora in the Middle Ages: Studies of the Medieval Environment and Its Impact on the Human Mind: Papers Delivered at the International Medieval Congress, Leeds, in 2000, 2001 and 2002*, ed. Sieglinde Hartmann (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 39. For other such laws, see Salisbury, *Beast Within*, 37–40. For Roman laws, whose considerations of the differing liability for wild and tame animals no doubt influenced medieval law, see Bernard S. Jackson, “Liability for Animals in Roman Law: An Historical Sketch,” *The Cambridge Law Journal* 37 (1978): 122–43; and Bruce W. Frier, “Bees and Lawyers,” *The Classical Journal* 78 (1982–83): 105–14; for a similar medieval law, see Henry de Bracton, “De feris bestiis” and “De piscatione, venatione, apprehensione” in *De legibus et consuetudinibus Angliae*, ed. George Edward Woodbine, vol. 2 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1915–42), 42.

some animal,⁵ but in England they did not face systematic extirpation until the twelfth century, when the English crown enveloped huge sections of the realm in the forest law and thus claimed an exclusive right to violence against now enforested prey animals. Only then did the English crown issue a bounty on wolves and establish the *luparii*, professional wolf-hunters,⁶ for lupine violence had now become criminalized. Wolves were sometimes even introduced into game parks, not to cull herbivores, but to be hunted.⁷ The degradation of wolves' status from feared predator to poacher to prey—and, at that, inedible prey—suggests that such hunts functioned primarily to reaffirm the human, and particularly the elite, position as masters of violence.

Medieval hagiography abounds with stories in which wild animals intrude on human-controlled space only to submit to a divinely supported human dominion. In Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, a seventh-century tale collection read and translated throughout the Middle Ages, the young Saint Boniface needed only to pray to strike dead a hen-eating fox.⁸ Iudoc, a seventh-century hermit revered in eleventh-century England, commanded an eagle to return a hen it had just stolen; when it did, "confestim moriens putridum fecitque cadaver"⁹ (dying immediately, the eagle made a stinking carcass; 256). In many other stories where wild carnivores encountered saints, the saints spared the animals' lives to enlist them into service, so transforming the wilderness into a kind of Eden in which animals willingly served humans.¹⁰ Florentius of Norcia's bear, "by nature a devourer of sheep, curbed its native appetite and pastured [Florentius's sheep] instead."¹¹ In a twelfth-century life of the Irish saint Modwenna, a wolf that kills a calf becomes the calf's replacement, the guardian of the calf's grieving mother, and a protector of the entire herd, giving birth to a race of wolves that "even to the present day" guard cows, eating only wild animals, which is to say, animals outside of human zones of control.¹² Francis of Assisi famously

5. Aleksander Pluskowski, *Wolves and the Wilderness in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006).

6. Robert Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075–1225* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 671.

7. John Cummins, *The Hound and the Hawk: The Art of Medieval Hunting* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 60–61.

8. Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, trans. Odo John Zimmerman (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1959), I.9, 40–41.

9. Michael Lapidge, ed. and trans., "A Metrical Vita S. Iudoci from Tenth-Century Winchester," *Journal of Medieval Latin* 10 (2000): 255–306.

10. Salter, *Holy and Noble Beasts*, 22–52.

11. Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, III.15, 136.

12. Geoffrey of Burton, *Life and Miracles of St Modwenna*, ed. and trans. Robert Bartlett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 21.

forced a wolf to stop terrorizing the town of Gubbio and to subsist, like a friar, on Gubbio's charity.¹³ Secular figures, too, were often nurtured (rather than eaten) by carnivores, a clear reversal of the direction of violence in favor of humans. The best known example is the story of Romulus and Remus being suckled by a wolf. Likewise, in the Middle English romance *Octavian*, a lion seized an infant "hir whelpes with [it] to feede" (to feed her cubs with it; 345),¹⁴ yet, miraculously, "the child slepid in the lyones mouthe" (the child slept in the lion's mouth; 361), until the lion set it aside to fight and kill a threatening griffin. Apparently forgetting about its own cubs, the lion then sated itself with the griffin's carcass, while the infant did so with the lion's milk.

Elite hunting techniques are a particularly rich site for investigating the importance of the control of animal violence to human self-conception. Although the violence of dogs, for example, was often indispensable to many elite hunters, the techniques codified in cynegetic manuals allowed elites to continue to imagine themselves as masters. Per Susan Crane, the use of hunting cries to control hunting dogs demonstrates the hunting party's "informed mastery," or what I might call, nuancing Weber, their legitimized authority, over their world ("legitimized" rather than "legitimate," for the authority only becomes legitimate through humans' manufactured self-conception of themselves as the definers of legality).¹⁵ Humans' mastery over their hunting animals is even more apparent in techniques that prevented dogs from killing or freely eating the prey. Dogs were allowed to slow, harry, and corner prey, while humans were meant to deliver the killing blow.¹⁶ Hunting rules required that the field butchery reserve a portion of the prey for the dogs, but they also required that the dogs eat only at their master's command.¹⁷ In practical terms, the restrictions preserved the bulk of the carcass for the human hunters while ensuring that the dogs received the positive

13. Marion Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies: English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis*, 4th ed. (Quincy: Franciscan Press, 1991), Section 21, 1348–51. I am indebted to Susan Crane for the characterization of the wolf as a mendicant. For a great many other stories about saints controlling animals, see Alexander, *Saints and Animals*; David N. Bell, ed. and trans., *Wholly Animals: A Book of Beastly Tales* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1992); and Helen Waddell, ed. and trans., *Beasts and Saints* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1934).

14. Harriet Hudson, ed., *Four Middle English Romances* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1996). For the same scene in the French original, see Karl Vollmöller, ed., *Octavian: Altfranzösischer Roman* (Heilbronn: Henninger, 1883), lines 535–634.

15. Susan Crane, "Ritual Aspects of the Hunt à Force," in Hanawalt and Kiser, *Engaging with Nature*, 72–76.

16. For dogs and dog hunting, see Cummins, *Hound and Hawk*, 41.

17. Marcelle Thiébaux, "The Medieval Chase," *Speculum* 42 (1967): 272.

reinforcement of a reward. At the same time, to restrict dogs' actions in hunting, restrain them from the kill, and permit them to eat only with human permission ensured that neither the dogs' violence nor their necessity to human hunting might call human mastery into question. The ritual protection of human mastery encompassed even carrion birds, which were left the scraps from the carcass; as the Middle English *Tristrem* puts it, "þe rauen he 3aue his 3iftes, / Sat on þe fourched tre"¹⁸ (to the raven he gave his gifts, and set them on the forked branch; 502–3). The ravens now became beneficiaries of the hunters' largesse, their appetite appropriated by a ritual that indicates that the control not only of violence but also of meat-eating concerned humans (a point I treat in more detail in this chapter's second section).¹⁹

The human need to control and supervise the violence of certain carnivorous animals may account for ambiguous attitudes towards domestic cats. Douglas Gray remarks that cats belong "more than other domestic animals, both to the world of the tame and the wild, both to the world of the day and of night."²⁰ Their utility to humans only heightened their ambiguity. Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies* observes that "Common people call it the cat (*cattus*) from 'catching' (*captura*),"²¹ but since cats exercise this skill independently of human command, and do so, moreover, when most

18. Alan Lupack, ed., *Lancelot of the Laik; and, Sir Tristrem* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1994). Naomi Sykes, "Hunting the Anglo-Normans," in Aleksander Pluskowski, ed., *Just Skin and Bones?: New Perspectives on Human-Animal Relations in the Historical Past* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2005), 74, provides evidence for the practice of this ritual by observing that the bone granted to carrion birds—the "corbin-bone"—is in fact missing from the cervid skeletons of post-conquest England (the Normans introduced this elaborate hunting ritual into England along with their forest law).

19. For the latter point, see Britton J. Harwood, "Gawain and the Gift," *PMLA* 106 (1991): 487. My placement of the corbin-bone ritual in the context of mastering violence differs with the interpretations of both Anne Rooney, *Hunting in Middle English Literature* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1993), and Marvin, *Hunting Law and Ritual*. Rooney, *Hunting*, 88, citing Frazier's *Golden Bough*, proposes that through this ritual, "the hunter is exonerated from the blame he incurs through killing the beast and 'makes his peace' with nature"; similarly, Marvin, *Hunting Law and Ritual*, 126, "As a kind of hunting occult, the corbin's bone reflects the hunter's subliminal consciousness of dependency on the natural world, if not also the unease of setting hands to the 'mortal coil,' and so dramatizes an economy of give and take with that world by rendering to the overseers their 'right.' As such it may function as a talisman for success in the next hunt."

20. Douglas Gray, "Notes on Some Medieval, Mystical, Magical, and Moral Cats," in *Langland, the Mystics, and the Medieval English Religious Tradition: Essays in Honour of S. S. Hussey*, ed. Helen Phillips (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1990), 190, a point also made in Salisbury, *Beast Within*, 14–15, or indeed, as Gray 195 cites, the 1773 *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which states that "of all domestic animals, the character of the cat is the most equivocal and suspicious."

21. Isidore of Seville, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. Stephen A. Barney et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 254.

humans are asleep, they seem at best partners with humans rather than their servants. It is therefore unsurprising that cats were associated with heresy and witchcraft, and that the Cathars, for example, were accused of having acquired their name through ritual dalliances with cats: among others, Alan of Lille, in *De Fide Catholica Contra Haereticos*, writes, “Cathari dicuntur a cato, quia, ut dicitur, osculantur posteriora catti, in cujus specie, ut dicunt, apparet eis Lucifer” (Cathars are called this from “cat,” since, it is said, they kiss the posterior of a cat, in which form, they say, Lucifer appears to them; *PL* 210: 366).²² Such a killer, intractably independent but made useful only through that independence, affronted human superiority by providing no ready site for either approval or proscription.

The human concern with independent animal violence aimed to do far more than just defend humans and their property. It aimed to support the human system by allocating vulnerability differentially. The differential allocation of vulnerability, as Judith Butler has argued, serves fantasies of discrete selfhood by allowing the “properly” invulnerable (for Butler, the United States during the recent Iraq war; in my book, the human) to deny “its dependency [and] its exposure” to others by “exploit[ing] those very features in others, thereby making those features ‘other to’ itself.”²³ It is not that humans deny their vulnerability altogether. Rather, humans reject their involvement in the “primary vulnerability”²⁴ shared by all worldly beings, all of whom can be damaged; all of whom can cease to be, even die; all of whom, more fundamentally, can not be able: “mortality resides there, as the most radical means of thinking the finitude that we share with animals, the mortality that belongs to the very finitude of life.”²⁵ Rejecting this primary vulnerability, humans construct themselves as properly vulnerable only before God, other humans—signally, as a result of the Fall, which brought

22. For more on suspicions towards domestic cats, see Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons: An Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt* (New York: New American Library, 1977), 21–22; Erica Fudge, *Pets* (Stocksfield: Acumen, 2008), 79–81; Malcolm H. Jones, “Cats and Cat-Skinning in Late Medieval Art and Life,” in *Fauna and Flora in the Middle Ages*, ed. Hartmann, 99–100; Sara Lipton, “Jews, Heretics, and the Sign of the Cat in the Bible moralisée,” *Word and Image* 8 (1992): 362–77.

23. Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (New York: Verso, 2004), 41; I treat Butler in more detail in my third chapter. For an allied statement on vulnerability, see Cora Diamond, “The Difficulty of Reality and the Difficulty of Philosophy,” in Stanley Cavell et al., *Philosophy & Animal Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 74, “The awareness we each have of being a living body, being ‘alive to the world,’ carries with it exposure to the bodily sense of vulnerability to death, sheer animal vulnerability, the vulnerability we share with them. This vulnerability is capable of panicking us.”

24. Butler, *Precarious Life*, 31.

25. Derrida, *Animal that Therefore*, 28.

death into the world, and, in fact, before animal pests, which evidence not animal agency but God's moral care for humans, as explained by *Sidrak*, where the ants and flies that "bite man somtide [occasionally]" (2203) serve humans by stifling the sin of pride (2204).²⁶ Humans and their animal property are not in turn properly vulnerable to animals; however, all animals are potentially properly vulnerable to at least some set of humans, and most are vulnerable to all. Animals cannot resist this allocation of vulnerability without assaulting the human itself. For, to use Žižek's terminology, which I treated in my introduction, independent animal violence within human zones of control is a subjectively violent offense against the invisible objective violence of the human status quo. The mastery of life and death by which humans arrogate the capacity to permit (only) certain controlled acts of animal violence is therefore yet another tool to preserve human mastery and therefore the human. But this mastery proves to be yet another point of vulnerability for humans, which in turn accounts—as I explain in my next section—for the elaborate, anxious control in the Christian penitentials over the meat it designates as *morticinum*, carrion.

II.

Carrion in the Penitentials: The Filth of Animal Appetites

The *Annals of Fulda* records an incident in a ninth-century famine in which a starving family enters the forest of Thuringia to scavenge for food. Desperate, the father decides that he and his wife should eat their child. While removing the child more deeply into the woods to slaughter it out of its mother's sight, he spots two wolves devouring a doe's carcass. After chasing away the wolves, the father saves himself, his wife, and, especially, his child by eating what meat remains. This episode highlights the extremities to which famine drives people: the scavenging of carrion and, eventually, infanticide and anthropophagy. The discovery of the venison is nevertheless not simply good fortune, or a feeble miracle; it is the prelude to a crime: as the *Annals* explains, "ambo tamen de carnibus lege prohibitis necessitate

26. This was a widespread point; for example, see Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor*, S. E. Banks and J. W. Binns, ed. and trans. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), I.8, 55, which explains that God made "cattle, the creeping things, and the beasts—the cattle to help us, the creeping things and the beasts to challenge us—in the last place he fashioned man."

coacte se recrearunt”²⁷ (compelled by necessity, the two revived themselves with flesh forbidden by the law). The *Annals*’ condemnation of the family seems peculiar. It might have praised God’s miraculous provision of food or the righteousness of a parent who, unlike so many Biblical mothers, resisted rather than succumbed to infantophagy;²⁸ alternately, it might have denounced the indifference of fortune or demanded more strenuous piety to prevent future catastrophes; it might even have denounced the cruelty of fathers. Instead, the episode concludes by condemning as illegal a meal whose repulsiveness and undesirability would seem self-evident. Raoul Glaber’s tenth-century history, for example, records a famine in which the consumption of “carrion [*morticinum*] and things too horrible to mention”²⁹ occurs right before people resort to selling human corpses in the marketplace “as if they were livestock”: clearly Raoul expects that carrion will be automatically understood as just this side of anthropophagy. But as unnecessary as the *Annals*’ prohibition of carrion might seem, it is only one of a host of places in medieval Christian texts that not only characterize carrion as the food of desperation but also expressly forbid consuming it. In warning against carrion, the *Annals*, like other texts with similar prohibitions, inadvertently raises the question of why anyone, particularly a Christian, would bother to condemn it at all.

For simply in condemning a particular food, albeit a disgusting one, the monks of Fulda counteract an important element of Christian self-perception. As early as the Maccabean revolts, both adherents and enemies of Judaism had identified its food laws as a synecdoche for the whole of Jewish faith and culture.³⁰ Christianity differentiated itself from Judaism—and later, Islam and various heresies—by imagining itself unburdened by alimentary laws, or, at least, by alimentary laws that distinguished between licit and illicit foods. Whatever their purpose in the early days of the faith, Matthew

27. Quoted in Pierre Bonnassie, “Consommation d’aliments immondes et cannibalisme de survie dans l’Occident du haut Moyen Âge,” *Annales* 44 (1989): 1046. For the whole episode, with a translation, see Timothy Reuter, trans., *The Annals of Fulda* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 31–32.

28. Cf. Leviticus 26:27–29, Deuteronomy 28:53–57, Lamentations 2:20 and 4:10, and 2 Kings 6:28–29.

29. Rodulfus Glaber, *Historiarum libri quinque: The Five Books of the Histories*, ed. Neithard Bulst, trans. John France and Paul Reynolds (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), IV.4.10, 189. For unclean eating in later medieval histories, see Julia Marvin, “Cannibalism as an Aspect of Famine in Two English Chronicles,” in Martha Carlin and Joel Thomas Rosenthal, eds., *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe* (London: Hambledon Press, 1998), 73–86.

30. Gillian Feeley-Harnik, *The Lord’s Table: The Meaning of Food in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994).

15:17–19 (“Do you not understand, that whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the privy? But the things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and those things defile a man”) and Titus 1:15 (“All things are clean to the clean: but to them that are defiled, and to unbelievers, nothing is clean: but both their mind and their conscience are defiled”) became the *loci classici* of Christian alimentary permissiveness. According to Augustine’s influential judgment, no food is of any moral importance in itself. In a treatise against the Manichaeans, a vegetarian sect to which he had once belonged, Augustine explains that God “condemns the nature of no food that human society accepts but the sins that wickedness commits,”³¹ a point he repeats in *Confessions*:

I know that Noah was given permission to eat any kind of flesh meat that was serviceable as food, that Elijah was sustained with meat, and that John, for all his marvelous grace of abstinence, was not defiled by animal food when he made use of locusts. On the contrary, I am aware that Esau was led astray by craving for lentils, that David condemned himself for his intemperate thirst for water and that our King himself was tempted not by meat but by bread. So too your people deserved rebuke in the desert not because they wanted meat, but because their hunger for food led them to murmur against the Lord.³²

In Augustine’s system, moderation and charity mattered to the good Christian, not the food in and of itself.³³ Christians could “fast” from vice, attending more to how they ate—with solicitude for community and without gluttony—than to what they ate.³⁴ This spiritual eating, removed from the

31. Augustine, *Answer to Faustus, a Manichean* (*Contra Faustum Manichaeum*), ed. Boniface Ramsey, trans. Roland Teske, vol. 1/20, *The Works of St. Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2007), XXXII.13, 416. For Augustine’s tense relationship with his own Manichean past, see, for example, Veronika E. Grimm, *From Fasting to Feasting, the Evolution of a Sin: Attitudes to Food in Late Antiquity* (London: Routledge, 1996), 185.

32. Augustine, *The Confessions*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Maria Boulding, vol. 1/8, *The Works of St. Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1997), X.46, 268.

33. *The Catholic Way of Life and the Manichean Way of Life*, II.35, 85, in Augustine, *The Manichean Debate*, ed. Boniface Ramsey, trans. Roland Teske, vol. 1/19, *The Works of St. Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2006).

34. The notion of fasting from vice appears as early as Clement of Alexandria’s pedagogical manuals; see Grimm, *Attitudes to Food in Late Antiquity*, 106, and 57–69, for a review of Paul’s teaching on food. Injunctions to fast from vice persist throughout medieval Christianity: see Giles Constable, “Moderation and Restraint in Ascetic Practices in the Middle Ages,” in *From Athens to Chartres: Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought. Studies in Honour of*

supposedly materialist concerns of Judaism and of other faiths, attested, so far as Augustine was concerned, to the superiority and sophistication of Christianity.

The Augustinian approach was complicated by the few but definite food prohibitions of the Christian scriptures. Acts 15:20 and Acts 15:29, the Apostolic Decree, prohibit “the pollutions of idols” (that is, food that has been used in pagan religious ceremony), “things strangled [*suffocatum*],” and blood. Early Christians did follow this law. In his *Apology Against the Gentiles*, Tertullian (c. 200) writes about the attempts by pagans to trick Christians into eating blood sausages; and an account of the martyrs of Lyons in 177 preserved in Eusebius’s *History of the Church* includes the story of Biblis, who even under torture denies charges of Christian infanthophagy by crying out, “How could children be eaten by people who are not even allowed to eat the blood of brute beasts?”³⁵ The Western Christian church forbade the consumption of blood at least into the eleventh century,³⁶ and even later for clergy: the twelfth-century *Decretum* of Gratian declares anyone who violates the prohibitions of Acts anathema.³⁷ Yet nothing in the Apostolic Decree immediately suggests the value of charitable eating, nor does it make allowances for the good hearts of Christians so dedicated to celestial things that they regard all food with indifference; moreover, the Decree itself apparently requires Christians to follow laws modeled on the reviled Jewish food laws. Faced with these problems, later Christian commentators struggled to justify the continued adherence to the Apostolic Decree, or, at least, to explain why it should have ever have been imposed at all. Origen, for example, argued that the Apostolic Decree protects Christians from pollution by demons, which thrive both on blood and on the

Edouard Jeuneau, ed. Edouard Jeuneau and Haijo Jan Westra (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 318, where Constable observes that “physical mortifications must be inspired by pure intentions and love of God and were seen as a means towards an end rather than as an end in themselves.”

35. See Tertullian, *Apology Against the Gentiles*, Tertullian and Minucius Felix, *Apologetical Works and Octavius*, ed. Hermigild Dressler, trans. Rudolph Arbesmann (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1950), IX, 25, and Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, trans. G. A. Williamson, rev. Andrew Louth (London: Penguin, 1989), 142.

36. Laurioux, *Manger au Moyen Âge*, 102–3.

37. *Decretum* D. 30, c. 13 (PL 187: 167A) reads, “Si quis carnem manducantem ex fide cum religione, praeter sanguinem et idolo immolatum et suffocatum, crediderit condemnandum, tanquam spem non habentem, qui eam manducat, anathema sit.” See also the *Glossa Ordinaria*, “Hoc praeceptum convenit servare illis, qui uncti sunt oleo spirituali, ne comedant illud, cujus sanguis non est effusus, quod epistola apostolorum servandum decrevit” (This precept is fit to keep for those who were anointed with spiritual oil; they should not eat that from which blood is not drained, because the letter of the apostle decreed this should be followed; PL 114: 475C).

meat sacrificed to them. Another approach interpreted the laws as ascetic prohibitions. Cassian's *Conferences* and Bede's *Commentary on Acts* (PL 92: 977A–B) both argue that the Church instituted the Apostolic Decree as minimal rules to follow once the early Church had lost its original purity. As Cassian wrote:

But when at the death of the Apostles the multitude of believers began to wax cold, and especially that multitude which had come to the faith of Christ from diverse foreign nations, from whom the Apostles out of consideration for the infancy of their faith and their ingrained heathen habits, required nothing more than that they should “abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.”³⁸

Working in this tradition, some early explanations utilize the Apostolic Decree to distinguish good from bad asceticism: the fourth-century Council of Gangra (in Northern Asia Minor) condemned the asceticism of the followers of Eustathius of Sebaste as heretical by declaring, among other things, that “if anyone condemns those who with reverence and faith eat meat that is without blood, has not been sacrificed to idols, and is not strangled, claiming that because of their partaking they are without hope, let such a one be anathema.”³⁹ No doubt to help justify the Apostolic Decree as an ascetic rule, some exegesis characterized the flesh of strangled animals and meat with blood as pleasurable. In *On the Work of the Holy Spirit*, the early-twelfth-century Benedictine abbot Rupert of Deutz denounced the consumption of bloody flesh both because “belluarum atque ferarum est” (it is suitable for beasts and savage animals; PL 167: 1715C) and because it also “nasci fornicatio” (gives birth to fornication). To solidify his argument, Rupert cites Exodus 32:6, “and the people sat down to eat, and drink, and they rose up to play” to link the abstinence “a suffocatis et sanguine” (from suffocated things and blood) to the abstinence “ab omni turpi et inordinata devoratione” (from all base and immoderate devouring). Similarly, Rufinus of Bologna's twelfth-century *Summa decretorum*, in commenting on *Decre-*

38. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, trans., *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, vol. 11: Supitius Severus. Vincent of Lerins. John Cassian (New York: Parker & Company, 1894), 480.

39. Second canon, translation quoted from Vincent L. Wimbush, trans., *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 451. For more on the early Christian injunction to eat meat, with particular attention to the fourth-century *Apostolic Constitution*, see Robert McQueen Grant, “Dietary Laws among Pythagoreans, Jews, and Christians,” *Harvard Theological Review* 73 (1980): 304–5 and Lewis, *Study of the Interpretation of Noah*, 110.

tum D. 30, c. 13, characterizes bloody meat as a delicacy (“curiosi sunt et divitiarum”) and therefore to be condemned as a hindrance to asceticism.⁴⁰ By contrast, Augustine’s hostility to “materialist” alimentary laws required that he dismiss the Apostolic Decree altogether. In *Contra Faustum*, an anti-Manichaean treatise, he explains that while early evangelists instituted the prohibitions to avoid discouraging converts who wished to continue following Jewish dietary laws, in his day those “who are afraid to touch these things . . . are laughed at by the rest.”⁴¹ In essence, to preserve the logic of the Christian supersession of Judaism, Augustine must call upon the faithful to join him in mocking their own scripture. His “historicist” rejection, if not his mockery, appears in such widely influential works as Aquinas’s *Summa Theologica* (1a2ae, q. 103, art. 4, ad. 3, “Whether since Christ’s Passion the legal ceremonies can be observed without committing mortal sin”) and Nicholas of Lyra’s *Postilla*, which explains:

hunc enim cibum conversi de iudaismo abhorrebant. Et ideo licet esse cibus licitus tamen propter amicabilem societatem scriptum fuit gentilibus ut abstinerent a talibus sicut frequenter contingit quem aliquis abstinet a cibo quem scit abhominabilem socio suo. Procedente autem tempore cessante causa cessavit effectus.⁴²

Converts from Judaism abhorred this food. For that reason, the food was allowed to be licit, yet for the sake of the community harmony it was written to the gentiles that they should abstain from such food just as frequently as it happened that another of their associates abstained from food that he thought abhorrent. With time, the cause ceased.

40. Rufinus of Bologna, *Summa decretorum*, ed. Heinrich Singer (Aalen: Scientia Press, 1963), 70–71. Note that another commentary, contemporary with Rufinus’s, follows the historicist approach by explaining that the law was instituted “ad removendum scandalum Judaeorum” (so as not to scandalize the Jews; Terence Patrick McLaughlin, ed., *The Summa Parisiensis on the Decretum Gratiani* [Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1952], 30). For bibliographic material on these two works, see Kenneth Pennington, “Medieval Canonists: A Bio-Bibliographical Listing,” <http://faculty.cua.edu/pennington/biobibl.htm>.

41. Augustine, *Contra Faustum*, XXXII.13, 416. See also the explanation in Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*, trans. Bernard Noble and Gerald Shinn (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), 449, who suggests that the Apostolic Decree perhaps relieved Gentile Christians from the obligation of following the full range of Jewish law and thus relaxed rather than imposed rules.

42. Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla super Actus apostolorum, Epistolas canonicales, et Apocalypsim, cum additionibus* (Mantua: Paul von Butzbach, 1480), on Acts 15:20 and 29 (no page number; abbreviations expanded). Nicholas then cites, as is usual in this context, Matthew 15:17–19 and 1 Timothy 4:4, “For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be rejected that is received with thanksgiving.”

To cite an example of an Augustinian reading contemporary with the *Annals of Fulda*, Pope Nicholas I's ninth-century letter on Christian practices to the newly formed Bulgarian church records the following doctrinal inquiry, "Animalia sive volatilia, si sine ferro mactentur, et solo ictu hominis percussa moriantur, si liceat comedi sciscitamine" (You ask whether animals and birds are permissible to eat if they are slaughtered without being wounded by a weapon and die solely from human blows; *PL* 119: 1011B–D), that is, if flesh is licit for eating if the animal has not been bled after being killed. Nicholas answers by quoting Augustine's point about the obsolescence of the Apostolic Decree (although, having struck down one stricture, Nicholas adds another: animals hunted by Christians but killed by pagans, and vice versa, are forbidden to Christians).⁴³

Nonetheless, these various approaches to the Christian food laws better provide a context for medieval Christian attitudes toward alimentary laws in general than they provide any direct explanation for the attitude toward carrion taken by the Fulda *Annals*. Clearly neither apostates nor epicures, the Thuringian family violates the strictures of their own faith—and, as I will argue, abdicates their human mastery of violence—only because of starvation. The doctrinal rationale for the condemnation in the *Annals* must therefore be sought, at least initially, in Jerome's commentary on Ezekiel 44:31, "The priests shall not eat of any thing that is dead of itself [*morticinum*] or caught by a beast, whether it be fowl or cattle." Jerome explains that *morticinum* (carrion) is the same thing as the *suffocatum* (strangled things) prohibited in Acts. As a result, Christians should shun not only *suffocatum* but also any animal "captum a bestia" (seized by beasts; *PL* 25: 444A–B). Jerome's interpretation radically differs from Augustine's historicist, anti-Judaic interpretation of the Acts prohibitions. Jerome at once preserves the contemporary applicability of Acts and strengthens the lines between the Apostolic Decree and Jewish food prohibitions, for Ezekiel 44:31 is only one of several places in the Hebrew scriptures that condemn carrion.⁴⁴ Jerome's interpretation and preservation of the Acts laws also changed the character of the

43. Readings of the precept in the later Middle Ages tended to give it a moral interpretation; for example, Blangez, *Ci nous dit*, vol. 1, chapter 153, "Interdiction de la chair étouffée" (*The Prohibition of Suffocated Meat*), 152–53, explains that the demand that blood be drained from meat signifies the need to reveal one's sins to one's confessor, or that eating blood is like committing rapine against the weak and poor. For further discussion of the dynamics of meat-eating in the Christian intellectual tradition, with special attention paid to the paradox of simultaneous calls for abstinence and condemnations of (heretical) asceticism, see Dianne M. Bazell, "Strife among the Table-Fellows: Conflicting Attitudes of Early and Medieval Christians toward the Eating of Meat," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 65 (1997): 73–99.

44. Exodus 22:3; Leviticus 7:24, 17:15, and 22:8; Deuteronomy 14:21; Ezekiel 4:14.

prohibitions, as Jerome's definition of "suffocatis et sanguine" concerns not only inept or forbidden modes of butchery, that is, proscribed outcomes of human labor, but also flesh made unclean by the acts of animals.

The *Poematum*, the sixth-century Biblical epic of Avitus of Vienne, alludes to Jerome's combination of the proscriptions of *morticinum* and *suffocatum* by describing antediluvian mankind as "vitam brutorum more tenebat" (living like beasts; IV.21), "sanguine potus erat" (IV.23; drunk with blood), great meat-eaters with throats smeared with gore, who, worse still, routinely "quadrupes, propria qui morte necatus, / saevior aut certe quem vincens bestia cepit, / pastus erat, quem nulla fides, lex nulla vetabat" (fed on animals that had died a natural death, or that a more ferocious creature had captured and killed, restrained by neither faith nor law; IV.25–27).⁴⁵ Far more significant, however, was the use of Jerome's interpretation by the penitentials, works whose influence must be directly responsible for the condemnation of the Thuringian family, and whose importance in shaping attitudes toward human and animal violence should not be understated. The penitentials, which were handbooks for the application of Christian law and instruction in Christian behavior, developed in sixth-century Ireland and spread to Britain and the Continent through Irish and eventually Anglo-Saxon missionaries. Modern editions of the penitentials include works produced in what are now England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, and Spain. Although no penitentials were produced or even copied after the twelfth century, many of the penitential prohibitions made their way both into canon law and into the confessional manuals of the later Middle Ages. For example, Robert of Flamborough's thirteenth-century *Liber poenitentialis* exemplifies the format and detailed psychological concerns of the confessional works of its era, but it also draws on the specific proscriptions of the eleventh-century work of Ivo of Chartres and Burchard of Worms and the twelfth-century canons of the Bishop Bartholomew of Exeter (which themselves draw on still earlier works such as the eighth-century penitential of Egbert of York), to condemn those who worship rocks and trees, sacrifice to demons, or drink blood or semen, or any woman who places her son on a roof or in an oven to cure his fever.⁴⁶ In short, penitentials were widely influential throughout

45. Barring the first quotation, translation, with slight modifications, is from Bonnie Efros, *Creating Community with Food and Drink in Merovingian Gaul* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 19. The Latin is from Avitus of Vienne, *Alcimi Ecdicii Aviti viennensis episcopi Opera quae supersunt*, ed. Rudolf Peiper, MGH 6,2 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1883).

46. Robert of Flamborough, *Liber poenitentialis*, ed. J. J. Francis Firth (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1971), 262–64. For examples and explanations of other peculiar practices condemned by the penitentials, see Cyrille Vogel, "Pratiques supersti-

virtually all the areas overseen by either by the Roman church or, in the earlier period, Irish Christianity for at least half a millennium, if not far longer, affecting both clerics, who used them for training and for compiling canon law, and laypeople, who were overseen and instructed by priests.⁴⁷ Common topics treated by the penitentials include prohibitions of murder and theft, guidance in the proper treatment of the Eucharistic Host, and the censure of rituals and sexual acts at least implicitly identified, through the condemnation, as non-Christian. Their instruction on proper Christian eating—how to keep Lent, whether it is allowed to swallow the blood from one's own bleeding gums⁴⁸—follows Jerome in defining and prohibiting carrion: flesh polluted by animal violence is labeled as *morticinum* or *suffocatum*, and its consumption is forbidden or, at least, restricted. An important example of food laws in the penitentials can be found in the seventh-century Irish penitential of Adomnan, eighteen of whose twenty canons are alimentary prohibitions. Because many of its canons proscribe carrion and because many later penitentials preserve these canons in some form, I quote the Adomnan penitential at length:

1. Marine animals cast upon the shores, the nature of whose death we do not know, are to be taken for food in good faith, unless they are decomposed.
2. Cattle that fell from a rock, if their blood has been shed, are to be taken; if not, but if their bones are broken and their blood has not come out, they are to be rejected as if they were carrion.

tieuses au début du XIe siècle d'après le Corrector sive medicus de Burchard, évêque de Worms (965–1025),” in *Études de civilisation médiévale, IXe–XIIe siècles: mélanges offerts à Edmond-René Labande à l'occasion de son départ à la retraite et du XXe anniversaire du C.É.S.C.M. par ses amis, ses collègues, ses élèves*, ed. Edmond René Labande (Poitiers: C.É.S.C.M., 1974), 751–61.

47. For this narrative of the development of penitentials, see Allen J. Frantzen, *The Literature of Penance in Anglo-Saxon England* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983); Rob Meens, “The Frequency and Nature of Early Medieval Penance,” in *Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages*, ed. Peter Biller and A. J. Minnis (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 1998), 35–62; Sarah Hamilton, *The Practice of Penance, 900–1050* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001); Rob Meens, “Penitentials and the Practice of Penance in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries,” *Early Medieval Europe* 14 (2006): 7–21. In telling the story this way, I aim to avoid the controversy over the development of auricular, private penance. For a brief approach to the controversies, see, for example, Michael Driscoll, *Alcuin et la pénitence à l'époque carolingienne* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1999), 54–55.

48. See, for example, K. M. Delen, “The Paenitentiale Cantabrigiense: A Witness of the Carolingian Contribution to the Tenth-Century Reforms in England,” *Sacris Erudiri* 41 (2002): 363.

3. [Animals] that have died in water are carrion, since their blood remains within them.
4. [Animals] seized by beasts and half-alive are to be taken by bestial men (*bestialibus hominibus*).⁴⁹
5. A half-alive animal seized by sudden death, an ear or other part being torn off, is carrion.
6. Swine's flesh that has become thick or fat on carrion is to be rejected like the carrion by which the swine grow fat. When, however, it has been reduced and returned to its original thinness, it is to be taken. But if [a swine] has eaten carrion once or twice or thrice, after this has been ejected from its intestines it is to be taken in good faith.
7. Swine that taste the flesh or blood of men are always forbidden. For in the Law an animal that pushes with the horn, if it kills a man, is forbidden; how much more those that eat a man.
8. Hens that taste the flesh of a man or his blood are in a high degree unclean, and their eggs are unclean; but their chicks may lawfully be preserved since the uncleanness of their mothers does not pollute them. . .
14. Things drowned in water are not to be eaten, since the Lord hath prohibited the eating of flesh that contains blood. For the flesh of an animal drowned in water the blood remains coagulated. This the Lord prohibits, not because in those days men ate raw flesh, since it would be none too sweet, but because they had been eating drowned and carrion flesh. And the law written in metrical form says: "Thou shalt not eat carrion flesh" . . .
18. A beast that has only been seized with a deadly bite and not quite killed is to be eaten by beasts and by bestial men—the ear or any part which the beast contaminated with its teeth having been cut off and given to the dogs. For it seems to him fitting that human beasts should eat the flesh that has been served to beasts.
19. In like manner he forbids the eating of marrow of the bones of stags of which wolves have eaten.
20. Likewise he also forbids the eating of stags of whose blood we see a small quantity to have flowed out through their legs broken in a trap, affirming that they are carrion on the ground that the higher blood had not flowed, which is the guardian and seat of life; for, though the extremity of blood has flowed through whatever extreme member, yet

49. Maria Moisé, "The Rotten Gift: *Caro data fuit pauperibus*," *Medieval Yorkshire* 26 (1997): 6, cites du Cange's definition of *homines bestiales* as "peasants," but rightfully notes the definition's inadequacy.

the thicker and denser blood in which the life has its seat remains clot-
 ted within the flesh. Thus, unless the infliction of a wound disturbs
 the seat of life, there is no shedding of blood but merely injury to an
 extreme part; and therefore he who eats such flesh shall know that he
 has eaten flesh with blood. For since the Lord has forbidden the eating
 of flesh with blood, what was lacking is not the cooking of the flesh
 but the draining of the blood; and what has been said above must be
 understood also of beasts that have died in extreme weakness after the
 cutting off or cutting of an ear. Their fat, however, and their hides we
 shall have for diverse uses.⁵⁰

Influential rearticulations of such laws on the continent, Britain, and
 Ireland include the ninth-century penitential of Halitgar of Cambrai, which
 decrees that “he who eats the flesh of animals whose [manner of] death he
 does not know shall do penance for the third part of a year”⁵¹ and the early-
 eleventh-century *Corrector* of Burchard of Worms, which, following the for-
 mat of a model dialog between confessor and penitent, outlaws the Christian
 consumption of carrion: “Comedisti morticina, id est animalia quae a lupis
 seu a canibus dilacerabantur, et sic mortua inventa sunt? Si fecisti, X dies
 in pane et aqua poenitere debes” (Did you eat carrion, that is, animals that
 have been torn by wolves or dogs, and thus were found dead? If you did
 so, you must do penance for ten days on bread and water; *PL* 140: 698D).
 An eighth-century penitential that may have been composed by Bede’s fol-
 lower Egbert of York was translated into Old English in the eleventh century,
 and, like so many other penitentials, it also identifies carrion and forbids its
 consumption.⁵² Later lawcodes also circulate the prohibition: the twelfth-

50. Ludwig Bieler, ed. and trans., *The Irish Penitentials* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1963), 177–81. For other references to carrion in the Irish penitentials, see *ibid.*, *The Preface of Gildas on Penance*, 13 at 63; *The Penitential of Cummean*, IX.3 at 125, IX.16 at 127; *The Irish Canons*, 14 at 161; *The So-Called Bigotian Penitential*, 217; *The Old-Irish Penitential*, I.3 at 260 (in this and subsequent footnotes, in those cases where penitentials have numbered canons, the first number indicates the canon number—and perhaps, as in the Cummean and Old-Irish penitentials, the section number—and the second the page number of the edition).

51. John T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer, eds., *Medieval Handbooks of Penance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 65 at 309.

52. Robert Spindler, ed., *Das Altenglische Bussbuch (sog. Confessionale pseudo-Ebber-
 ti): ein Beitrag zu den kirchlichen Gesetzen der Angelsachsen: kritische Textausgabe nebst
 Nachweis der mittellateinischen Quellen, sprachlicher Untersuchung und Glossar* (Leipzig:
 B. Tauchnitz, 1934), 192–93. On this work, see Frantzen, *Literature of Penance*, 72. For the
 carrion prohibitions of Bede and Egbert in Latin, see Reinhold Haggenmüller, *Die Überlie-
 ferung der Beda und Egbert zugeschriebenen Bussbücher* (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 1991),
 VI.5a and V.5a at 307, and 326.

century Icelandic *Grágás* allows only animals whose cause of death is known to be eaten and, elsewhere, using a somewhat different albeit allied method, distinguishes meat from carrion by declaring that meat is animal flesh that comes from slaughter;⁵³ the *Gulathing* (c. 1150) and *Frostating* (c. 1260) laws of Norway allow carrion to be eaten only after it is purified with holy water and suspended to empty the carcass of all blood;⁵⁴ and the *Panormia* of Ivo of Chartes (c. 1095) states that “Qui manducat carnem immundam, aut morticinam, aut dilaceratam a bestiis, 40 dies poeniteat” (whoever eats unclean flesh, or carrion, or animals torn by beasts should do penance for forty days; *PL* 161: 884B), although, like several other penitentials of its era, it draws on the seventh-century penitential of Theodore of Canterbury by requiring only light fasting for people compelled by starvation to eat carrion.⁵⁵ Further evidence for the persistence of the carrion prohibition

53. Andrew Dennis, Peter Godfrey Foote, and Richard Perkins, trans., *Laws of Early Iceland: The Codex Regius of Grágás with Material from Other Manuscripts* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1980), 48.

54. Larson, *Earliest Norwegian Laws*, 58 and 242–43. In chapter 31, 58, “Concerning Forbidden Meats and Animals that have Died of Themselves,” the laws allow the flesh of animals that have drowned, fallen off a cliff, or even been savaged by wolves to be eaten, but only if “salt and water . . . be consecrated and sprinkled upon the carcass.”

55. McNeill and Gamer, *Handbooks*, 191, “He who eats unclean flesh or a carcass that has been torn by beasts should do penance for forty days. But if the necessity of hunger requires it, there is no offense, since a permissible act is one thing and what necessity requires is another.” Also, Delen, “Paenitentiale Cantabrigiense,” 363, “Qui manducat carnem immundam aut morticinam aut delaceratam a bestiis, xl dies peniteat. Si necessitate famis cogente, multo levius” (let whoever eats unclean meat or carrion or flesh torn by beasts fast for forty days. If necessitated by the exigency of famine, let the penance be much lighter). For more instances of carrion law, see Rob Meens, ed., *Het Tripartite Boeteboek: overlevering en betekenis van vroegmiddeleeuwse biechtvoorschriften (met editie en vertaling van vier tripartita)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1994); the *St. Gall Penitential*, 35 at 336 and 36 at 342; the *Vienna Penitential*, II.1 at 7–8 and 14 at 362–63; the *Capitula Iudiciorum* 1d and 1k, at 465; and the *Parisian Penitential*, 77, 81, 87 at 496–97. See also Pierre Michaud-Quantin, “Un manuel de confession archaïque dans le manuscrit Avranches 136,” *Sacris Erudiri* 17 (1966): 49. Finally, see most of the penitentials in Raymond Kottje, ed., *Paenitentia franciae, italiae et hispaniae saeculi VIII–XI*, 2 vols, CCSL 156–156A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1994), *Paenitentia: the Simple Paris Penitential*, 36 at 77; the *Oxford I Penitential*, 47 and 43 at 92; the *Florence Penitential*, 100; the *St. Hubert Penitential*, 59 at 115; the *Merseburg Penitential*, 147; the *Merseburg Penitential B*, 15 at 174; the *Oxford II Penitential*, 52 and 56–58 at 200–201; and, in volume 156A, the *Vigilum Penitential*, 105–7 at 12 and the *Silensian Penitential* 221 and 224–26 at 40. The works in Meens and Kottje date from the ninth to the twelfth centuries. Pierre Bonnassie, “Consommation d’aliments immodes,” 1038–39, provides a useful list of further references to *morticina*, mostly tagged to the foundational editions of penitentials in Hermann Wasserschleben, ed., *Die Bussordnungen der abendländischen Kirche* (Halle: C. Graeger, 1851). Bonnassie does not note the unique role played by animal violence in turning edible into inedible flesh; instead, he lists carrion under headings dealing with general animal pollution (fecal contamination and so forth).

in the later Middle Ages is uncertain. To cite a few, admittedly random, examples: in the twelfth-century life of the Welsh hermit Elgar, when Elgar discovers the carcass of a white stag in the forest, and God commands him to eat it, Elgar protests only about being given too much to eat;⁵⁶ in William of Canterbury's late-twelfth-century *Life and Miracles of Thomas Becket*, a sheep injures itself, and its owner stabs it in the throat to kill it himself "ne morticinum fieret" (lest it become carrion);⁵⁷ and the *Cursor Mundi*, a late-thirteenth-century Middle English doctrinal compendium and retelling of Biblical and apocryphal history, includes the injunction "Þe flesshe þat beest bifore haþ taast / Ete 3e not þerof þe last"⁵⁸ (the flesh that beasts have tasted before [you], do not eat even a little bit of it; 6817–8). Patterns of deletion and inclusion from the earlier to the later manuscripts of the *Cursor Mundi* reveal a desire to keep the work current with the most up-to-date concerns of piety;⁵⁹ because the carrion law survived editorial culling, while other elements of the work did not, several copyists must have decided that it was still relevant.

The penitentials themselves and other lawcodes tend not to explain the rationale of the carrion laws. An exception, the *Silensian Penitential*, ascribes the prohibition of blood and suffocated meats to Jerome and Cassian and finally adds, "Similiter ad Noe vel ad Moysen dominus sanguinem comedi pro[h]ibuit" (similarly, the Lord prohibited Noah and Moses from eating blood).⁶⁰ In their influential anthology of penitentials, John T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer echo this point by suggesting that the penitentials are in part an "attempt to apply the regulations of Exodus and Leviticus to the conditions of seventh-century Ireland."⁶¹ At least a portion of the Adomnan penitential, cited above, supports this opinion, as the final phrase

56. William Jenkins Rees, ed. and trans., *The Liber landavensis, Llyfr Teilo* (Llandover: Welsh Manuscript Society, 1840), 6 and 285; for discussion of this episode, see Alexander, *Saints and Animals*, 25–27.

57. James Craigie Robertson, ed., *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, vol. 1 (London: Longman & Co., 1875), 343.

58. Sarah M. Horrall, ed., *The Southern Version of Cursor Mundi* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1978), Vol. 4.

59. John J. Thompson, *The Cursor Mundi: Poem, Texts and Contexts* (Oxford: The Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature, 1998).

60. Kottje, *Paenitentialia*, 221 at 39.

61. McNeill and Gamer, *Handbooks*, 131. See also Hugh Connolly, *Irish Penitentials and Their Significance for the Sacrament of Penance Today* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1995), 42–43, who (incorrectly) explains that "in contrast to Old Testament teaching, there are no unclean foods in the New Testament. . . . [O]ne would expect the only regulations concerning food and drink to be those which would serve the demands of temperance, health and hygiene in order that the individual would not be unduly impeded in his daily activity."

of its twentieth canon quotes Leviticus 7:24, “adipem cadaveris morticini et eius animalis quod a bestia captum est habebitis in usus varios” (The fat of a carcass that hath died of itself, and of a beast that was caught by another beast, you shall have for divers uses). However, as Rob Meens observes, had the penitentials merely been a recrudescence of the Mosaic dietary laws, they would have prohibited shellfish or, especially, pork, whose prohibition had become perhaps the chief alimentary characteristic of Judaism. But pigs appear in the penitentials only when they themselves eat carrion; otherwise, they are not proscribed, nor even considered.⁶² Unlike the laws of the Pentateuch, but like the laws of Acts and Jerome’s gloss, the penitentials’ food prohibitions generally concern themselves more with the animal’s manner of death than with its species. Barring horses, whose flesh many penitentials prohibit, all animals are alike for the eater: what matters is how they die.⁶³

Nonetheless, even if the carrion laws had derived from Jewish laws, this in itself would not provide an explanation for why the penitentials prohibit carrion, but would rather only shift the need for an explanation elsewhere. Faced with this problem, both medieval and modern scholarship has tried to identify hygiene as the rationale for the carrion laws. McNeill and Gamer observe, for example, that “most of the prohibitions commend themselves on sanitary grounds as providing a necessary minimum of protection to health,”⁶⁴ and Augustine’s *Contra Faustum* avers that carrion is forbidden only because it is unhygienic (“the flesh of animals which have died of themselves is diseased, and is not likely to be wholesome, which is the chief thing in food”). Hygiene may in fact work as an explanation, but only

62. The persecutors of the Jews in the Maccabees often tried to force Jews to apostatize by consuming pork: in 1 Maccabees 1:43–52, the Greek tyrant Antiochus forbade the Jews to follow their laws; he outlawed circumcision, the Sabbath, and all Jewish holy days, and also “commanded altars to be built, and temples, and idols, and swine’s flesh to be immolated, and unclean beasts”; in 2 Maccabees 6:18–31, Eleazar, chief of the scribes, suffered martyrdom specifically because of his refusal to eat pork.

63. A letter of Pope Zachary to the missionary Boniface, martyred by the Germans in 754, is a rare exception. Zachary censured the consumption not only of horseflesh but also of the beaver, hare, jackdaw, stork, and crow. See Reinhold Rau, ed., *Briefe des Bonifatius. Willibalds Leben des Bonifatius. Nebst einigen zeitgenössischen Dokumenten* (Darmstadt: Freiherr vom Stein-Gedächtnisausgabe IVb, 1968), letter 87, 294. On prohibitions against horseflesh, see Meens, “Eating Animals in the Early Middle Ages,” in Craeger and Jordan, *The Animal-Human Boundary*, 4–9; and Sigaut, “La viande de cheval,” 85–91. The imposition of four years’ penance upon eaters of horseflesh in an eighth-century Irish penitential is unusual; more typical is the statement of a tenth-century penitential (*Capitula Iudiciorum* C. 1i at 465, in Meens, *Tripartite Boeteboek*, “equus non prohibetur ad manducandum, tamen non est consuetudo” [the horse is not prohibited for eating, but eating it is not customary]). Bonnassie, “Consommation d’aliments immodés,” 1037, lists every reference to horseflesh in the many penitentials edited in Wasserschleben, *Bussordnungen*.

64. McNeill and Gamer, *Handbooks*, 131.

if “hygiene” is understood as a cultural system rather than in its modern meaning within the context of germ theory. Carrion, like meat in general, is the flesh of a dead animal, and it is not necessarily rotten: for example, the *Annals* gives no indication that the doe had been dead for long. It is nonetheless carrion, and hence unhygienic: the question is why the wolves’ violence should have been thought to pollute the meat. Decades ago, Mary Douglas influentially reexamined the Levitical food laws’ own system for dividing clean from unclean animals, dislodging centuries of anachronistic and otherwise inadequate rationales for the Levitical prohibitions. The common assertion that trichinosis made pigs unpalatable to the Hebrews relies upon an explanation unavailable to the writers of Leviticus and ignores the equally dangerous diseases to which cows and goats are prone; other such explanations, wherein pigs’ wallowing or unsuitability to desert survival constitute “uncleanness,” likewise substitute scientific explanations for the nonscientific culture promoted and enshrined in the Pentateuch.⁶⁵ As Douglas observed, pigs, shellfish, and all the other forbidden animals were unclean because of morphological and behavioral differences from the ideal characteristics of the animals in Pentateuchal taxonomic groups.⁶⁶ Edible terrestrial beasts should have cloven hooves and chew the cud (Leviticus 11:3; Deuteronomy 14:6): pigs have divided hooves, but do not chew the cud, so they are unclean for eating. This is a self-referential, culturally specific structural system, evidencing psychological desires for order and fear of the monstrous rather than concerns sensible to modern notions of disease or ecology (which are themselves surely not free from their own culturally specific schema). Inspired by Douglas’s methodology, Rob Meens argues that scientific explanations can no more account for the penitential food laws than for the alimentary laws of the Pentateuch.⁶⁷ Germ theory, for example, cannot explain many of the penitentials’ alimentary codes: germ theory would not proscribe the honey of bees that have stung a human to death—a stricture in many penitentials—or require that carrion be distributed to dogs or “bestial men” rather than destroyed or discarded.⁶⁸ Instead, as Meens asserts, when

65. For a review of scholarship on the pork prohibition, see Frederick J. Simoons, *Eat Not this Flesh: Food Avoidances from Prehistory to the Present*, 2nd ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 13–102. At 66–67, Simoons observes that trichinosis is not pig-specific, nor did it even appear in the Near East prior to the thirteenth century. It should be clear from my discussion above which side I have chosen in the symbolist vs. materialist debate for explaining food laws.

66. Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger, 1966), 29–57.

67. Rob Meens, “Pollution in the Early Middle Ages: The Case of the Food Regulations in Penitentials,” *Early Medieval Europe* 4 (1995): 3–19.

68. *Ibid.*, 10.

the penitentials link the words *immunda* (unclean) and *morticina*, they refer not to the carrion's material putrescence but to its *social* filth.

Meens suggests that the alimentary laws of the penitentials establish concentric circles of increasing impurity, with "the most pure, i.e., the monks, in the center, the less pure, the *manaig*, in a second orbit, and in an outer circle the not fully human, the *homines bestiales*."⁶⁹ However, Meens's chart must be expanded, since there is at least one circle outside the *homines bestiales*, namely actual beasts, domestic and wild, the very creatures whose illicit actions pollute food.⁷⁰ The kinds of pollution caused by animals can be classified according to what responses the penitentials require. The responses evidence a culture most keenly concerned with policing those forms of pollution that involve violence against and between animals and thus with establishing a human monopoly on legitimized violence. Beasts might pollute grain by eating part of it; they might pollute any food by defecating in it. The food, however, can still be cleansed. The *Paenitentiale Vindobonense B*, for example, explains that:

Si aues stercorant in quacumque liquore, tollatur ab eo stercus et sanctificetur aqua et mundus erit cybus. Si ceciderit sorix in liquore, tollatur foras et hoc potum spargatur aqua sanctificata et sumatur, si uiuens sit. Si autem mortua fuerit inuenta, omne liquore proiciatur foras et mundetur uas.

If birds defecate into any beverage, let the feces be taken out from it and let it be blessed with [holy] water and the food will be clean. If a mouse falls into the beverage, let [the mouse] be taken outside and let the drink be sprinkled with holy water and accepted, if the mouse is alive. If however

69. Meens, "Eating Animals," in Craeger and Jordan, *The Animal-Human Boundary*, 17.

70. On violence in the food laws, see Jean Soler, "The Semiotics of Food in the Bible," in *Food and Drink in History: Selections from the Annales, ESC*, ed. Robert Forster and Orest A. Ranum, trans. Elborg Forster and Patricia M. Ranum (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 131, where Soler argues that God first reserved all killing to himself and then, after the Flood, reserved only blood, which symbolized life and death (this point is not uncommon in medieval Christian doctrine: e.g., Rufinus of Bologna, *Summa decretorum*, 70: "quia enim sedes anime in sanguine est, recte per sanguinem anima designatur" [for since the seat of the soul is in the blood, the soul is rightly indicated by "blood"]). While Soler concentrates on the distinctions between humans and God, I focus on those between humans and animals; but he and I accord in our concentration on violence. Also see Stéphane Boulc'h, "Le statut de l'animal et la notion de pureté dans les prescriptions alimentaires chrétiennes du haut Moyen Âge occidental," in *Le statut éthique de l'animal: conceptions anciennes et nouvelles. Journée d'étude Université de Liège, 18 mars 1995*, ed. Liliane Bodson (Liège: Université de Liège, 1996), 41–59; I differ with Boulc'h's argument that Christians sought to expel violence of all sorts from their communities: clearly, violence against animals, or at least the control of violence, could not be abandoned.

the mouse is found dead, let all the liquid be thrown outside and the vessel cleaned.

The same penitential is much stricter about the consumption of carrion: “Qui manducat carnem aut morticinam aut delaceratam a besteis, XL dies peniteat”⁷¹ (whoever eats flesh or carrion that was torn by beasts, let him do penance for 40 days). The differentiation between, on the one hand, food polluted by animal defecation, clumsy animals, and the appetites of pests for grain, and, on the other hand, meat polluted by animal violence is usual throughout the penitentials. In the penitentials, escalating levels of illicit animal agency correspond to escalating levels of pollution, and animals that killed and ate other animals exhibited the most agency. Notably, while humans might kill and eat an animal belonging to someone else, and while in some penitentials human might produce carrion by killing an animal without draining its blood (by strangling or smothering it, for example), for the most part only animals can create *morticina*. The crime is not simply one of illicit slaughter or theft, but a crime whereby animals claim the dominion over other animals that should belong exclusively to humans. Thus the eighth-century pope Gregory III, in his *Excerptum de Diversis Criminibus et Remediis Eorum*, stresses the illicitness of any animal carcass that humans just “find”:

Suffocatum dicimus quod sine sanguinis effusione perimitur, vel quod in laqueo necatur. Si quis a lupo vel a cane aut in laqueo suffocatum invenerit nullatenus manducetur: nec sanguinem alicuius bestiae quis manducare aut bibere praesumat. Quod si quis fecerit, quadraginta dies poeniteat.

We call “suffocated” what is killed without an outpouring of blood, or what is killed in a snare. If anyone should find [an animal] “suffocated” by a wolf or dog or in a snare, he absolutely should not eat it: neither should anyone presume to eat or drink the blood of any kind of animal. And whoever does this, let him do penance for 40 days. (*PL* 89: 595D–596A)

The particular control over animal violence may explain a peculiarity in the twentieth canon of the Council of Orleans (533). After forbidding Christians who have reverted to idolatry or eaten food sacrificed to idols to associate with members of the church in good standing, it likewise anathematizes those who “bestiarum morsibus extincta vel quolibet morbo aut *casu* suf-

71. *Paenitentiale Vindobonense B* in Meens, *Tripartite Boeteboek*.

focata vescuntur”⁷² (my emphasis; eat [the flesh of animals] killed by the bites of animals or from any disease or suffocated *by accident*). The Council follows the prohibitions of Acts 15 fairly closely, but modifies them by implicitly allowing good Christians the flesh of any animal suffocated *deliberately*. The loophole, only suggested by Jerome’s gloss, permits humans to eat any animal—barring those polluted in pagan rituals—whose death they have intended: the chief concern is to preserve the difference between human and animal agency in the enormously important realm of violence against animals.

Three ninth-century works express the logic of the carrion prohibition even more overtly. Two penitentials, the St. Hubert and Merseburg B, forbid the consumption of any fish found dead in a river, “since it was not hunted by men.”⁷³ The other work, an anonymous cleric’s response to a king, possibly Louis the German, King of the Eastern Franks, expands on this point at far greater length; to the best of my knowledge, it is the most detailed discussion of *suffocatum* in the Middle Ages.⁷⁴ The letter first restates Jerome’s gloss on Ezekiel 44:21: “Suffocatum vocamus animal, quod a lupo seu urso et aliqua bestia strangulatum vel laceratum est. Huiuscemodi carne abstinendum dicimus, nec in usum vescendi tale aliquid presumendum” (We call an animal “suffocated” that is throttled or mangled by a wolf or bear or another beast. We say that this sort of flesh is to be abstained from and is not for use for eating or for any other consumption). Were this a penitential, the explanation would likely have stopped here, but a letter need not confine itself to the unornamented brevity of penitential prose. More to the point, the letter is addressed not to a general Christian audience but to a nobleman: the prohibition of animals mangled by “*aliqua bestia*” would forbid meat obtained with the assistance of falcons or dogs during the hunt, a restriction that could only have deeply dissatisfied its recipient, undoubtedly a devotee of hunting. Because the cleric has room to elaborate, and also because he

72. Charles de Clercq, ed., *Concilia Galliae a. 511–a. 695.*, CCSL 148a (Turnhout: Brepols, 1963), 102.

73. For the penitential of St. Hubert, a monastery in the Ardennes, see Kottje, *Paenitentialia*, V01.165, 59, at 115. For the Merseberg B penitential, see Kottje, 15 at 174. The other Merseberg penitential, also edited in Kottje, does not contain this canon. My points about the importance of policing animal violence in Christian food laws echoes and—by focusing on violence particularly—refines points in Salisbury, *Beast Within*, 66–69, where she observes that “if animals had begun to eat it, it was animal food,” a point she supports by citing penitentials and food codes from Bieler, *Irish Penitentials*, Wasserschleben, *Die Bussordnungen*, and Larson, *Norwegian Laws*.

74. Ernst Dümmler, ed., *Epistolae Karolini Aevi III*, MGH *Epistolae* 5 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1899), 633–36. The letter concludes with the writer making a plea for help in time of war and famine.

must, he permits Christians to eat meat caught with the assistance of hunting animals, explains why, and, through this justification, lays bare the otherwise unexpressed logic of the prohibition of carrion:

Quod vero a cane captum fuerit, non computamus inter suffocata, quia hominis est venatio, quem canis comitatur, cuius sagaci oderatu et pernici agilitate homo utitur in animalis captione, ipsaque captio non cani, sed homini assignatur. Nam et nos, cum scribimus, scripturam ipsam non calamo, quo litterae caraxantur, sed scriptoris manui deputamus. Pari modo de pedicis vel laquies ceterisque huiuscemodi sentiendum, quae omnia humanum ingenium et artificiosa repperit industria. Universaliter itaque licet concludere: quicquid hominis exercitio, arte vel calliditate capitur, non debere inter suffocata numerari, nec aliquo delicto adstringi eum, qui huiuscemodi cibum cum gratiarum actione presumpserit.

To be sure, that which was captured by a dog, we do not count among suffocated things, since man is the hunter, accompanied by a dog, whose acute sense of smell and quick agility are used by man in the capture of animals, and so this capture is assigned not to the dog but to man. For when we ourselves write, we assign the writing not to the pen that scratches the letters, but to the hand of the writer. It should likewise be thought about snares or other suchlike traps, all of which human ingenuity and skillful industry has invented. And so one may universally conclude: whatever is captured by human effort, art, or skill should not be numbered among suffocated animals, nor does anyone offend who consumes this kind of food with thanksgiving.

Terrestrial animals drowned in water are likewise fit for eating, so long as they were chased into the water by hunting dogs. Fish suffocated by being removed from water are also licit. Contradicting several penitentials,⁷⁵ the letter similarly allows the consumption of birds captured by tamed raptors, nets, or birdlime. In every case, the letter exempts dead animals from the category of *suffocatum* so long as humans intended their deaths, that is, so long as they died because of human agency. This is the most important

75. For example, the Viennese Penitential in Meens, *Tripartite Boeteboek*, II.8 at 362 reads “Aues uero et animalia cetera, si in retibus strangulantur, non comedenda ab hominibus, nec si accipiter obpresserit, si mortua inueniuntur, quia quattor [*sic*] capitula actus apostolorum precipiunt abstinere: a fornicatione et sanguine et suffocato et idolatria” (Birds and other animals, if strangled in nets, are not to be eaten by men, nor if they are taken by raptors, if found dead, since the fourth chapter of Acts teaches us to abstain “from fornications and blood and suffocated things and things sacrificed to idols”).

point. Dogs might be helpful or even necessary to the hunt, just as the pen is necessary to writing, but human agency encompasses whatever independent agency either of these tools might be thought to have. In praising canine skill while denying canine agency, the letter joins with a tradition stretching at least from Ambrose and Isidore of Seville to *Sidrak and Bokkus*. Ambrose praises the Dog of Antioch, which refused to abandon the corpse of its murdered master and then identified the killer. Isidore alludes to this story by listing, among the many laudable traits of dogs, that “they do not leave the body of their master even when he has died.”⁷⁶ *Sidrak* declares the dog the “wittiest beste” and the most nimble (“lighter noo beste renne ne can” [no beast can run more lightly; 6961]). But Ambrose declares, “that dogs are devoid of reason is beyond all doubt”; Isidore asserts that “it is part of their nature not to be able to live apart from humans”; and *Sidrak* combines its admiration for a dog’s skill with admiration for the dog’s submissiveness to humans: they are “trewest unto call” (the most responsive to being called; 6960) and “kyndelokere to man” (more beneficent to man; 6962) than any other animal.⁷⁷ In my first chapter, I discussed the refusal of *Ci nous dit* to recognize monkeys as having authentically upright bodies. It was precisely the monkey’s similarity to humans that made monkeys such a threat to human supremacy; in turn, the neutralization of such a potent threat by declaring simian posture inauthentically bipedal allowed humans to claim mastery all the more strongly. Regardless of how much the animal resembled humans or vice versa, *Ci nous dit* demonstrated that humans had not just the agency to act but also, more importantly, the capacity to decide what actions meant, even in the face of obvious contradictions. So too with this letter’s declaration that a hunting dog has no more independent agency than a pen. The analogy is clearly ill-fitting: no pen would write a charter on its own, but a poorly trained or high-spirited dog might, like a human, exercise its “quick agility” to hunt independently. The very ineptitude of the analogy contributes greatly to its effectiveness. By declaring the agency of hunting dogs illusory, and by doing so with an analogy whose obvious ineptness announces that humans can classify the world any way they see fit, the carrion letter demonstrates human supremacy all the more forcefully.⁷⁸

76. Isidore, *Etymologies*, 253.

77. See Ambrose, *Hexameron*, Paradise, and Cain and Abel, trans. John J. Savage (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1961), 241, sections 6.4.23–24; and Rabanus, *De universo*, PL 111: 223D–224A, which is virtually an exact quotation of Isidore. For later versions of the Dog of Antioch story, see the example and brief comparative study in J. W. Thomas, ed., *Medieval German Tales in English Translation* (Lexington, KY: Academic & Professional Research Associates Press, 1975), 126–34; for an example in Middle English, see *Sir Tyrmour*, in Hudson, *Four Middle English Romances*.

78. In reading prohibitions on carrion this way, I differ from Fiddes, *Meat*, 83–84, who,

One final point in medieval carrion law remains to be considered. The Mosaic laws, cited above, often require that *morticina* be given to dogs. The Viennese Penitential and the *Capitula Iudiciorum* likewise demand that carrion “porcibus et canibus dentur” (be given to pigs or dogs), while the Adomnan penitential, also cited above, demands that such flesh be given to “bestial men.”⁷⁹ Despite appearances, this is not an act of charity. Certain animals and bestial men are not so much receiving a gift as being dragooned into helping dispose of a pollutant; and the humans who distribute carrion do so not out of generosity but because they must. Even when illicit animal violence could be punished, the material evidence of the crime—the flesh of dead or wounded animals—persisted as a reminder of the violation of human control. Because carrion assaulted the human monopoly on legitimized violence against animals and hence assaulted the human itself, it could not simply be ignored. The required distribution of carrion enabled humans—at least the dominant humans—to repair their supremacy. Through the distribution, carrion will be consumed, but now only on terms set by dominant humans. Carrion cannot, however, be given to just anybody or anything. By refusing to eat carrion and by distributing it to eaters that were disdained, despised, or pitied, dominant humans showed that they had control over carrion, yet, at the same time, that they scorned it and anyone who would eat it. The combined condemnation and distribution restores what

after observing that “only meat from animals that humans have slaughtered is regarded as edible,” explains that “For were we to eat animals that had died other than under our control then by our own definition we would be scavengers and that is not our favoured self-image.” As I see it, it is not that humans wish to avoid being scavengers, but rather that they want to avoid being equal partners with animals.

79. Meens, *Tripartite Boeteboek*, 363. For the *Capitula Iudiciorum*, see Meens, *Tripartite Boeteboek*, 567: “Animalia, quae a feris et canibus consumuntur, non sunt comedenda ab hominibus, nisi forte adhuc viva occiduntur, sed porcibus et canibus dentur” (Animals that have been consumed by wild beasts and dogs are not to be eaten by humans, unless by chance they are killed while still living, but are to be given to pigs and dogs). As Moisé, “Rotten Gift,” observes, the carrion distribution requirement in the penitentials resembles a late-medieval English hunting law requiring that flesh from carcasses found in hunting preserves, if the animal was a deer killed by a poacher or another animal, be distributed either to lepers or to the poor. For the law, see the *Assizes of the Forest* in the appendix to *The Statutes at Large from the Second Year of the Reign of King George the Third to the End of the Last Session of Parliament. . . . With a Copious Index. And an Appendix, Consisting of Obsolete and Curious Acts, . . . Volume the Ninth* (London: Printed for Mark Basket and by the Assigns of Robert Basket; and by Henry Woodfall and William Strahan, 1765), 25–26. See also the two Scottish versions edited in John M. Gilbert, *Hunting and Hunting Reserves in Medieval Scotland* (Edinburgh: J. Donald, 1979), 297. For evidence of its enforcement, see G. J. Turner, ed., *Select Pleas of the Forest, Selden Society XIII* (London: B. Quaritch, 1901), 82, 83, 84, 87, 89, and several other places in this volume, and, for further discussion, *ibid.*, xxxvii–xxviii, which dates the portion of the laws containing the carrion law as potentially early as the reign of King John (xxxvii–xxviii n4). I plan to treat this law and elite hunting ideology at length in a separate article.

really matters, the control of meat and, in a broader sense, of violence, to the realm of lawgivers.

Derrida's exploration of violence, the law, and the possibility of just decision making in his "Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority'" helps to illustrate what is at stake in such policings of animal violence. Through his exploitation and critique of Pascal's and Walter Benjamin's considerations on justice, Derrida defends deconstruction—again—from charges of nihilism while frustrating his critics' and in fact his own self-satisfaction, or "good conscience," in purportedly just judgments. In his call "for an increase in responsibility," he discerns "excess and inadequation" in all supposedly self-contained, coherent legal systems; as he argues, any decision worthy of the name should attempt to consider the infinite demands of the "singularity of the other" rather than relying upon the "calculations"⁸⁰ of some universal law. This demand advances his Lévinasian ethical project, perhaps best expressed by the maxim "responsibility is excessive or it is not a responsibility."⁸¹ Essential to Derrida's project is his argument that law does not "rest on anything" except the repeated acts through which the law continually comes into being.⁸² Thus it is ethically and indeed intellectually indefensible to appeal to any foundation of law to justify a decision. Acts establishing law should not be understood as legal or illegal; they occur in an aporia outside, or rather prior to, any system of law. Drawing on interpretations of the psychoanalytic concept of *Nachträglichkeit*, retroactive rather than deterministic causality, Derrida observes that acts establishing a new system of law can possess only "anterior legitimacy,"⁸³ since they themselves create the conditions of (a new) juridical system:

A "successful" revolution, the "successful foundation of a State" . . . will produce *après coup* what it was destined to read in return, to give sense, necessity, and above all legitimacy to the violence that has produced, among others, the interpretative model in question, that is, the discourse of its self-legitimation.⁸⁴

80. Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar (New York: Routledge, 2002), 248, for the several phrases above. See also 244, where he writes, "Every time that something comes to pass or turns out well, every time that we placidly apply a good rule to a particular case, to a correctly subsumed example, according to a determinant judgment, law perhaps and sometimes finds itself accounted for, but one can be sure that justice does not."

81. Derrida, "Eating Well," 286.

82. Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, 248.

83. Ibid., 234. For *Nachträglichkeit*, see the discussion of "deferred action" by Jean Laplanche in vol. 1 in Alain de Mijolla, ed., *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* (*Dictionnaire International De La Psychanalyse*) (Detroit, MI: Macmillan, 2005), 377–79.

84. Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, 270.

Derrida's argument on retroactive legitimation clearly anticipates his elaboration of the dynamics of carnophallogocentrism; in fact, "Force of Law" includes one of Derrida's several early considerations on the question of the animal, when he writes:

In the space in which I am situating these remarks or reconstituting this discourse one would not speak of injustice or violence toward an animal, even less toward a vegetable or a stone. An animal can be made to suffer, but one would never say, in a sense said to be proper, that it is a wronged subject, the victim of a crime, of a murder, of a rape or a theft, of a perjury.⁸⁵

Domination comes first and the human follows. Even this says too much for the foundational act. As I argued in my previous chapter, the human never comes completely into being; it is always trying to justify itself. Because the foundational act "*always takes place and never takes place in a presence*,"⁸⁶ humans can never "catch up to the law"⁸⁷ to grant their law anterior legitimacy. For this reason, the supposedly foundational act of the human can never cease, since it can never be founded on anything but the act itself.

The policing of animal violence in the carrion laws witnesses to, and attempts to counteract, the contingency of the categories of both human and animal, both of which are structural categories of dominance and dominated rather than absolute identities. Because the hierarchical arrangement of the structure depends upon subjugation, any animal able to establish a position of dominance over other animals, especially in the presence of humans, has supplanted, or at least joined, humans in being "able to justify, to legitimate . . . or to transform the relations of law . . . and so to present itself as having the right to law."⁸⁸ The human monopoly on legitimized violence requires that all such threats from independent animal violence in the presence of humans be marked as illicit. Because the routine conversion of animals into meat is the clearest physical expression of human mastery, it is therefore especially important that such violence be policed and monopolized. François Duceppe-Lamarre observed that late-medieval records of the forests in Hesdin and Northern France counted as mere nuisances those wild animals not favored as game and that did not eat meat, but that the records were far more negative about nongame predators or carrion eaters, creatures that, like humans, ate other animals, so enacting a prerogative reserved

85. Ibid., 246–47.

86. Ibid., 269–70; original emphasis.

87. Ibid., 270.

88. Ibid., 268.

to humans.⁸⁹ So too in the penitentials and a host of other documents and practices. Derrida has spoken of “anterior legitimacy.” Surely the necessary companion to this concept is anterior *illegitimacy*, which is precisely how the carrion laws shape animal violence. The laws prevent animal violence from being able to claim the structural position of the human for itself: anteriorly caught up in these laws, independent interanimal violence will not have been able to produce *carnes*, a legitimate, desirable food, but only *morticinium* or *suffocatum*, filth, disorder, in short, a category violation. The laws also return control of the violated flesh to humans by having humans commandeer it and distribute it either to animals or to “homines bestiales,” who are further degraded simply by accepting this filth.

The *Annals*’ scorn for the deer flesh the Thuringian family eats and for the lupine violence that killed the deer returns the family to the fold of the human and registers worry about what would happen to the human if it shared a meal with a wolf. But its scorn should not simply be understood as disapproval of a criminal act or prevention of a human-lupine companionship. I have described the Thuringian family’s discovery of the wolves and the doe’s carcass as a “prelude to a crime,” that of eating “carnibus lege prohibitis” (flesh prohibited by law). It could be understood, however, as the prelude to two crimes: one against the church and the human itself, and another against the wolves. The twelfth-century abbot Norbert of Xantan, founder of the Premonstratensian order, identified human scavenging in just this way: several of his monks discovered a wolf eating a deer in the forest, chased off the wolf, and took the carcass back with them to their monastery. But the wolf followed, and waited outside like a domesticated dog, until Norbert, realizing that no wolf would act so calmly without reason, compelled his monks to confess the injury they had done it. Norbert then ordered his monks to return what was not theirs, and the wolf, “accepta denique lupus praeda sua” (finally receiving its prey), left in peace.⁹⁰ Monks had no more right to eat carrion sinlessly than anyone else did: little could have driven them to this crime except their own desperation. Despite their need, despite their humane generosity within this need to deliver the carcass over to their community, despite what might have been his own need, Norbert ruled

89. François Duceppe-Lamarre, “Une économie de l’imaginaire à l’oeuvre: Le cas de la réserve cynégétique d’Hesdin (Artois, XIIIe-XVe siècles),” in *Les forêts d’occident du moyen âge à nos jours: Actes des XXIVes journées internationales d’histoire de l’abbaye de Flaran*, 6, 7, 8 septembre 2002, ed. Andrée Corvol-Dessert (Toulouse: Presses universitaires du Mirail, 2004), 43.

90. *Vita Norberti*, ed. Roger Williams, in Georg Heinrich Pertz, *Historiae aevi Salici*, MGH SS 12 (Hanover: Impensis Bibliopolii Aulici Hahniani, 1856), 692. I thank Alexander, *Saints and Animals*, 116–17, for directing me to this story.

against himself and his community. He decided to do justice, though that justice meant he and his monks might starve. He gave back to the wolf—or the wolf, suffering no charity, took back what was his (for *accepta* means “receiving” and “taking”)—and, in so giving, in so having food snatched from his own hands, Norbert suspended his humanity, perhaps to the point of death. The wolf in the *Annals* not only lacked such a champion; it may well have also suffered a worse crime, for it must be recalled that it killed its deer during a time of famine. The primary cause of the famine may have been unequal distribution of goods within the human community. But it may just as well have been due primarily to bad weather: it was perhaps a time of crop failure, excessive or insufficient rain, perhaps a too bitter winter or an overdry summer. Other animals would not be immune to what afflicted humans. Deer might have been starving, weakened, which would have been at first advantageous to the wolves; eventually, however, wolves would have more and more difficulty in finding prey. The good fortune of the wolves in the Thuringian forest may have saved their lives, or it could have had they not suffered the bad luck of meeting with a human family. Having lost their meal, what became of the wolves? Being a merely human document, without Norbert of Xantan’s expansive concern, the *Annals* spares the wolves no sympathy. Being merely human, the *Annals* cannot consider the wolves wronged without wronging its own exclusive human community, founded as it is on such thefts.

CHAPTER 3



IN AND OUT OF MORTAL FLESH

S'il n'est autre vie, / Entre ame a homme et ame a truie / N'a donques
point de difference.¹

—Hélinand of Froidmont, *Vers de la mort*

I.

Animal Resurrection: Opening and Shutting the Gates of Heaven

When the world is re-established in its primeval state all the animals must obey and be subject to man and return to the first food given by God, as before the disobedience they were subject to Adam and ate the fruit of the earth. This is not the time to show that the lion will eat straw, but this indicates the size and opulence of the fruits. For if an animal like the lion eats straw, what will be the quality of the wheat whose straw is food fit for lions?²

So argued the second-century theologian Irenaeus in his *Against Heresies*. Though some animal rights thinkers understand Irenaeus as antici-

1. Hélinand of Froidmont, *The Verses on Death of Hélinand of Froidmont. Les vers de la mort: Old French Text with Verse Translation and Commentary*, trans. Jenny Lind Porter (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1999), 119: “if there is no other life, there is no difference at all between a human and sow’s soul.”

2. Book V, 33.4, translated in Robert McQueen Grant, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 179–80. For Irenaeus’s quasi-millenarian eschatology, see Eric Osborn, *Irenaeus of Lyons* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 139–40, and especially Christopher R. Smith, “Chiliasm and Recapitulation in the Theology of Irenaeus,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 48 (1994): 313–31.

pating the actual resurrection of either lions or straw,³ he may be speaking only about the general perfection of animals as part of creation's return to its prelapsarian condition. Furthermore, this paradise of lions may be but a temporary antechamber, since Irenaeus promises some Christians an even better existence with God beyond this paradise. Yet regardless of Irenaeus's precise beliefs, his text must be recognized as among those that at minimum promised an afterlife that, at least for a time, accommodates humans as well as flora and nonhuman fauna. Irenaeus had the support of an even earlier Christian work, Papias of Hierapolis's *An Interpretation of the Sayings of the Lord*, as well as that of scripture itself: Mark 9:43–47 threatens sinners with Hell's undying worm; Revelations 22:2 places the Tree of Life in the Eternal City; and, though medieval Christianity might not have considered the lush paradise promised by 2 Enoch 8:1–3 as canonical, it certainly so did regard those of Jeremiah 31:12 and Isaiah 11:6–9 and 65:25, the latter of which, by imagining lions and oxen peaceably sharing a meal of straw, frustrated Gnostic belief in an immaterial afterlife and inspired Irenaeus's anti-Gnostic literal gloss.

Eschatological expectations of similar content, if not necessarily of similar doctrine, are not uncommon in medieval faith. The testimony of Arnaud Sicre d'Ax, denounced as a heretic in 1321, describes the seventh, highest heaven as a place of “grande clarté, beaucoup d'anges, de beaux vergers et des oiseaux qui chantaient”⁴ (great brightness, many angels, of beautiful orchards and singing birds). It would be easy to dismiss Arnaud's vision as just a record of heterodox local belief, but it differs little from more doctrinally sound material. The seventh-century Northumbrian layman Drythelm, not atypically for visions of the otherworld, sees souls awaiting entrance to paradise in a “broad and pleasant meadow . . . filled with the scent of flowers.”⁵ Honorius of Autun's *Elucidarium*, a widely read and translated twelfth-century catechical encyclopedia, pictures the future world freed of the postlapsarian curse, blooming with “odoriferis floribus, liliis, rosis, violis immarcessibiliter” (unfading, sweet-smelling flowers—lilies, roses,

3. Julian H. Franklin, *Animal Rights and Moral Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 86.

4. Jean Duvernoy, trans., *Le registre d'inquisition de Jacques Fournier (Évêque de Pamiers), 1318–1325* (Paris: Mouton, 1978), 775.

5. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. D. H. Farmer, trans. Leslie Sherley-Price (New York: Penguin, 1990), V.12, 287. See Eileen Gardiner, ed., *Visions of Heaven and Hell before Dante* (New York: Italica Press, 1989), for the knight Owen, who encounters a similar field in St. Patrick's Purgatory, 143–44; as does Tundale, 182; the monk of Eynsham, 214, and Thurkill, 234.

violets; *PL* 171:1168D).⁶ Bernard of Cluny's twelfth-century *De contemptu mundi* describes heaven as a place where saints will "stroll and dance amidst holy lilies and blooming flowerbuds."⁷ Like many other painters of the Last Judgment, Fra Angelico imagines the afterlife as a garden thronged with the souls of the saved; a manuscript of a fifteenth-century compendium on the last judgment pictures animals among its celestial humans,⁸ as does a fifteenth-century painting by Giovanni di Paolo, which features, amid its grass, flowers, and trees, a sheep and several rabbits.⁹ While early Christianity sometimes imagined that Eden continued to exist on Earth as an antechamber for souls waiting to enter the final paradise,¹⁰ the aforementioned paintings and other such works portray not this world, which will be divinely immolated in the last days, but rather the perfection that comes after. These works picture, even if never quite articulating the point doctrinally, that all the world and its inhabitants will enjoy the benefits of the coming renewal.

Several early Christian documents more overtly advocate for the abandonment of an anthropocentric soteriology, and, more importantly, imagine the present world, and not only the future one, as one in which both humans and animals belong to the community of the faithful. In the *Acts of Philip*, Philip and his entourage baptize a goat and a leopard, both of which eventually take on human shapes so that they might receive the Eucharist. Another

6. For a brief review of debates concerning Honorius's identity, which relies on the work of Valerie Flint and Marie-Odile Garrigues, see Jeremy Cohen, "'Synagoga conversa': Honorius Augustodunensis, the Song of Songs, and Christianity's 'Eschatological Jew,'" *Speculum* 79 (2004): 310–11.

7. Bernard of Cluny, *Scorn for the World: Bernard of Cluny's De contemptu mundi*, ed. and trans. Ronald E. Pepin (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1991), 21.

8. This image, from the *Livre de la Vigne nostre Seigneur* (Bodleian MS Douce 134, f. 145 r.), is one of several discussed in J. T. Rhodes and Clifford Davidson, "The Garden of Paradise," in Clifford Davidson, ed., *The Iconography of Heaven* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1994), 69–109.

9. For the painting, see Giovanni di Paolo, *Paradise*, tempura and gold on canvas, transferred from wood, c. 1445 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City). For more on heaven as a garden, see Clifford Davidson, "Of Saints and Angels," in Davidson, *The Iconography of Heaven*, 24–25, which cites the church of S. Vitale in Ravenna as an early example of the Christian heaven imagined as a garden, and also Peter Damien's *De gloria paradisi*, in which heaven has springtime meadows.

10. Jean Daniélou, "Terre et Paradis chez les Pères de l'Église," *Eranos Jahrbuch* 22 (1953): 433–72; for further discussion of pre-Christian garden paradises, see J. Edward Wright, *The Early History of Heaven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 188–89, and, especially Jean Delumeau, *History of Paradise: The Garden of Eden in Myth and Tradition*, trans. Matthew O'Connell (New York: Continuum, 1995), for both the pre-Christian envisionings of earthly paradise and imaginations of this paradise through the modern era; for particular attention to interim paradises, Ananya Jahanara Kabir, *Paradise, Death, and Doomsday in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

story, even less committed to human uniqueness before God, imagines that once, in the wilderness, the Apostle Paul baptized a lion and that some time later he met the lion again in the arena:

Then Paul recognized that this was the lion which had come and been baptized. And borne along by faith Paul said, "Lion, was it you whom I baptized?" And the lion in answer said to Paul, "Yes." Paul spoke to it again and said, "And how were you captured?" The lion said with its own voice, "Just as you were, Paul."¹¹

As more animals are set on Paul and arrows shot at the lion, a hailstorm breaks out, freeing them both. Paul departs for Macedonia, while the lion "went away into the mountains as was natural for it."¹² The story might be construed as among the many variants of Pliny's story of Eplis of Samos, who rescued a lion from starvation by extracting a bone that had lodged in its mouth, so earning its adoration and assistance.¹³ But Paul's lion had sought assistance not for its body but for its soul. Rather than mutely holding out its paw, it speaks, as one believer to another, and nearly suffers martyrdom with Paul. It then, finally, returns to its own life, independent of humans and their needs, eschewing neither its baptism or its leoninity.

Several medieval Christian works, without any pretensions to being scripture, suggest that animals, like humans, deserve postmortem care. In *Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, a poor village priest buries his beloved dog

11. Medieval Christianity did not know the story of Phillip, translated in part in J. K. Elliott, ed. and trans., *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 2005), 515–16, although certain other apocryphal tales of Philip appeared in the Latin pseudo-Abdias, produced in France in the sixth or seventh centuries (Elliott, 525). Various sources cite the lion story from the *Acts of Paul*, such as early third-century Greek commentary on Daniel of Hippolytus of Rome, which proves through it that the lions could have been gentle to Daniel (Elliott, 355). Jerome dismisses the story's validity in his *De viris illustribus*, where he concludes that "the fable about the lion baptized by [Paul] we reckon among the apocryphal writings," because Luke, knowing Paul's life so well, would have included it had it been true. For further discussion, see Hobgood-Oster, *Holy Dogs and Asses*, 53–54; Christopher R. Matthews, "Articulate Animals: A Multivalent Motif in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles," in *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, ed. François Bovon, Ann Graham Brock, and Christopher R. Matthews (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 205–32; and Spittler, *Animals in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 182–87.

12. Elliott, *Apocryphal New Testament*, 379.

13. For other such stories, including versions in the twelfth-century chronicle of Geoffrey de Vigeois and Alexander Neckam's *De natura rerum* in which the lion's benefactor sails for home, while the abandoned lion swims alongside the boat until it drowns, see Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur, "The Grateful Lion: A Study in the Development of Mediaeval Narrative," *PMLA* 39 (1924): 485–524.

in a churchyard and dodges his venal bishop's condemnation by convincing him that the dog had set aside a fund for its own burial.¹⁴ The Middle English romance *Bevis of Hampton* ends with a church founded to pray for the souls of Bevis, his wife Josian, "And also for [Bevis's horse] Arondel, / Yif men for eni hors bidde schel" (and also for Arondel, if men shall pray for any horse; 4616–17).¹⁵ It may be too much to imagine that the priest expected his dog to join the other cemetery internees in the coming resurrection, not least of all because of the self-conscious silliness of the collection's other tales, but *Bevis* is a serious work that requests prayer for a horse in a pious and solemn conclusion. Judging by the evidence of one fifteenth-century veterinary manual, people did in fact pray for horses: the manual, full of charms and prayers to counteract all manner of equine disorders, calls upon the Trinity and then, for good measure, "þe sonne, and of þe mone, and of þe .vij. sterres, and of all creatures, and of all daingeles, and of all þe confessoeres, bisschopes, and of all hundred abbotes redy to syng on mydwynter nyght"¹⁶ (the sun, and the moon, and the seven stars, and all creatures, and all angels, and all confessors, bishops, and all 100 abbots ready to sing on midwinter night). However, like the story of Paul and the lion, *Bevis* requests assistance not for Arondel's body, which, being buried, is beyond care, but for his soul; it thus reserves the possibility that a horse, like a human, might need assistance to ease its journey through purgatory. Even *Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* might be taken seriously, since even jokes can have a serious core: when Saint Faith and Thomas Becket resurrect animals, their hagiographers call these miracles *joca* and *ludi*, trifles, acts that should not be taken seriously, evidencing not only disapproval but also, as Dominic Alexander remarked, a "sense of discomfort." For jokes, as Freud observed, can be symptoms, in this case, of the repressed recognition that not only humans should be revered; that human distinctiveness emerges only through scorn for others; and that the immortality for which humans hope, one—as I will treat below—without animals, and without the world they had shared, can hardly be counted as life.¹⁷

14. Rossell Hope Robbins, trans., *The Hundred Tales (Les cent nouvelles nouvelles)* (New York: Bonanza, 1960), 353–54. 386 lists several places where an analogous story, "Le Testament de l'âne" (The Last Testament of the Donkey), appears, including works by Rutebeuf and Poggio Bracciolini.

15. Ronald B. Herzman, Graham Drake, and Eve Salisbury, eds., *Four Romances of England* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997).

16. Willy Louis Braekman, ed., *Of Hawks and Horses: Four Late Middle English Prose Treatises* (Brussels: Omirel, 1986), 103–4.

17. Alexander, *Saints and Animals*, 92; Sigmund Freud, *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1960). I consider the sterility of the future paradise at greater length in my Epilogue.

A few medieval Christian thinkers argued that the soul, being immaterial, could not die, and that therefore animal souls were as immortal as those of humans,¹⁸ a point that contradicted the received wisdom evidenced in *Sidrak's* assertion that the animal soul is but an "oonde"; medieval ghost stories not uncommonly included animals, such as the horses of Hellequin's Hunt, or the several animals in a late-medieval collection of ghost stories, including one with a ghost that briefly takes the shape of a horse walking on its hind legs and another with a flock of human dead riding spectral "equos oves et boves . . . et universa pecora" (horses, sheep, and oxen . . . and all manner of livestock).¹⁹ These, and perhaps even other works and traditions, could serve as evidence that some Christianities imagined humans sharing an afterlife with all creation. But such evidence need not be sought only in recherché Christian writings, odd moments in medieval narrative, atypical spiritual philosophy, or, for that matter, ghost stories. It appears in the heart of Christianity, in the work of its first great doctrinal thinker, the Apostle Paul, who writes:

For the expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him that made it subject, in hope: Because the creature also itself shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain, even till now. And not only it, but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body. (Romans 8:19–23)

18. Honorius of Autun, *Clavis Physicae*, ed. Paolo Lucentini (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1974), "De anima irrationalium," 176–77, draws from Eriugena, *Periphyseon*, 375. For similar arguments, see Adelard of Bath, *Questions on Natural Science*, 111–19. These works were not unread in the Middle Ages: the *Clavis Physicae* survives in eight manuscripts; Adelard's *Quaestiones naturales*, more popular, survives in 31 (including fragments, incomplete copies, and one manuscript listing only the questions), plus a Hebrew translation: see Charles Burnett, "The Writings of Adelard of Bath and Closely Associated Works, Together with the Manuscripts in which They Occur," in *Adelard of Bath: An English Scientist and Arabist of the Early Twelfth Century*, ed. Charles Burnett (London: Warburg Institute, 1987), 175–76.

19. Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages: The Living and the Dead in Medieval Society*, trans. Teresa Lavender Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 93–121, for Hellequin. For the other two stories, written around 1400 in the blank pages of a thirteenth-century codex containing the *Elucidarium* and pieces by Cicero, and suffused with local English detail, see Montague Rhodes James, ed., "Twelve Medieval Ghost Stories," *English Historical Review* 37 (1922): 414 and 421. For a partial translation of these stories, see Andrew Joynt, *Medieval Ghost Stories: An Anthology of Miracles, Marvels, and Prodigies* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001), 120–25.

Despite the typically Pauline obscurity, the meaning seems clear enough: if “the creature” that groaningly awaits delivery from “corruption” into another, more perfect existence is understood as distinct from the human “ourselves” and “we” awaiting the “redemption of the body,” then Paul promises perfection and redemption to nonhuman creation and perhaps even an entrance, as perfected beings, into eternity.

Nevertheless, I must admit that what I have presented so far in this chapter are but faint hopes, tantalizing hints at the possibility of an animal afterlife, drawn from a farrago of genres and eras, all interested in animals, all dodging the limitations of a rigidly anthropocentric conception of valuable worldly beings. They had little effect on the dominant strains of medieval Christianity. Whatever Paul’s expectation of the universal perfection of creation, his disdain for animals instructed medieval Christian thinkers, a point I treat later in this chapter. As for Irenaeus, despite the soundness of his scriptural support, his straw-eating lions found no allies among a medieval audience more concerned with the diets of Edenic animals than with those of the coming paradise:²⁰ the section of his *Against Heresies* in which he made these claims was rediscovered only in the late sixteenth century; the Middle Ages would have known of it only through Eusebius’s *History of the Church*, which characterizes Papias and those misled by him, such as Irenaeus, as misreaders of the “mystic and symbolic” language of Scripture’s promise of a millennial kingdom. And Eusebius, at any rate, does not even mention the lions.²¹ The transformed leopard and goat of the *Acts of Phillip* likewise vanished, at least for European Christianity, and though Jerome at least acknowledged the story of Paul and the lion, he did so only to dismiss it. The verdant and zoological afterlives of Drythelm, Bernard of Cluny, and Honorarius probably should be understood as mere appearances rather than as actual objects,²² or they should be understood allegorically, per Savon-

20. For example, Augustine, *The Retractions*, trans. Mary Inez Bogan (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1968), 42, and Robert Grosseteste, *On the Six Days of Creation: A Translation of the Hexaëmeron*, trans. C. F. J. Martin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 208, which explains that “it is clear that according to the first law of nature and of the first establishment, all the animals of the earth ate fruits and seeds or herbs or the tips of trees.” He repeats this point on 253–54. For more on Eden’s vegetarian animals, see John Berkman, “The Consumption of Animals and the Catholic Tradition,” *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 7 (2004): 174–90.

21. Eusebius, *History of the Church*, 3.19, 103.

22. This is the conclusion of the fourteenth-century Dominican John of Dambach in his *De sensibilibus deliciis paradisi* (On the Sensible Delights of Paradise), a work I was unable to consult; for the relevant passages, see Francesco Santi, “Utrum plantae et bruta animalia et corpora mineralia remaneant post finem mundi: L’animale eterno,” *Micrologus* 4 (1996): 262–63.

arola's gloss of his own eschatological *Compendium of Revelations*, where his "white sheep, ermines, rabbits, and [other] harmless creatures" frolicking in a meadow represent "Christians engaged in the active life."²³ Or, most simply, these animals amid the garden should be understood as belonging to the standard furnishing for any *locus amoenus*, and thus as a doctrinally loose attempt to represent the ineffable joy of paradise through a serviceable medium for portraying pleasure. Notably, Fra Angelico's *Last Judgment* depicts paradise both as a garden thronged by the blessed resurrected, and, in its upper left-hand corner, as a heavenly and glowing city into which a pair of the blessed enter. The painting recalls an ancient Christian characterization of paradise as comprising a garden and city—an arrangement familiar to scholars of Middle English from the poem *Pearl*—but the painting's structure also seems pedagogic, as if directing the gaze of its viewers, like the blessed themselves, towards the immortal city, unsatisfied with a merely bucolic heaven.²⁴ Though the ghost stories imagine what at least appear to be animal spirits, none even gestures towards a doctrine of the immortality of animal selfhood; nor do any of the medieval Christian assertions for the immortality of the animal soul opine about where these immortal souls will spend eternity. Not even the Gospels' undying worm finds a place in the afterlife: *Summa Theologica*, SS q. 97, a. 2, "Whether the Worm of the Damned is Corporeal," asserts that the worms of hell "must be understood to be not of a corporeal but of a spiritual nature," standing for "the remorse of conscience." Other, less spiritual commentators did not dispel the worm's materiality, but required that infernal animals be understood as demons in disguise: the Middle English *Prick of Conscience*, an enormously popular and stultifyingly orthodox doctrinal compilation of the fourteenth century, explains that infernal hounds, adders, toads, wolves, lions, and "othir ver-

23. Bernard McGinn, ed., *Apocalyptic Spirituality: Treatises and Letters of Lactantius, Adso of Montier-en-Der, Joachim of Fiore, the Franciscan Spirituals, Savonarola* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 247–48. For further discussion of the allegorical emphasis in Christian doctrine on the garden of Heaven, see Daniélou, "Terre et Paradis," e.g., 440–41; and William McClung, *The Architecture of Paradise: Survivals of Eden and Jerusalem* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

24. Creighton E. Gilbert, *How Fra Angelico and Signorelli Saw the End of the World* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 46–47. Note that no study on heaven I encountered remarks on the doctrinal incongruity of the presence of nonhuman worldly beings in heaven or associated sites such as the earthly or interim paradises: in addition to the sources cited above, see Jan Swango Emerson and Hugh Feiss, eds., *Imagining Heaven in the Middle Ages* (New York: Garland, 2000); Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang, *Heaven: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988); Carolyn Muessig and Ad Putter, eds., *Envisaging Heaven in the Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Ulrich Simon, *Heaven in the Christian Tradition* (New York: Harper, 1958); and Peter Toon, *Heaven and Hell: A Biblical and Theological Overview* (Nashville, TN: Nelson, 1986).

myn” “sal nocht be elles, bot devels of helle, / In liknes of hydus bestes and vermyne”²⁵ (other vermin . . . shall be nothing else but devils of Hell in likeness of hideous beasts and vermin; 9450–51). Similarly, the Middle English *Jacob's Well*, an extended penitential guidebook, has a spectral, tormented knight explain that “bis hors þat beryth me is a feend, þat turmentyth me, & beryth me to peyne of helle”²⁶ (this horse that bears me is a fiend that torments me and bears me to the pain of Hell), and therefore not an animal but a demonic psychopomp.

The exegetical reaction to Paul's promise of general perfection is especially telling. Origen inspired the first strain of exegesis when he utilized Paul to frustrate the faith of those who worshiped celestial bodies: if such bodies would be perfected, then they must be at present imperfect and thus merit no piety. This partially nonhuman salvation is a somewhat more expansive soteriology than what became usual to medieval Christianity, yet because Origen believed celestial bodies to be rational, ensouled beings, he also limited Paul's promise to only those forms of worldly beings that, like humans, were recognized as possessing reason.²⁷ Augustine's response to Origen, which further circumscribed the verses' scope, proved to be foundational to medieval commentary.²⁸ In the *Refutation of the Priscillianists and Origenists* and in question sixty-seven of the *Miscellany of Eight-Three Questions*, Augustine argued that Paul referred only to humans. Augustine has not discarded Paul; he still allows for the perfection of all creation, but only through humans, whom Augustine characterizes as a microcosm, hav-

25. Richard Morris, ed., *The Pricke of Conscience* (Berlin: A. Asher & Co., 1863). It reiterates the point at lines 6978–92.

26. Arthur Brandeis, ed., *Jacob's Well: An Englisht Treatise on the Cleansing of Man's Conscience. Ed. from the Unique Ms. about 1440 A. D. in Salisbury Cathedral*, EETS o. s. 115 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1900), 214.

27. Paul Lebeau, “L'interprétation origénienne de Rm 8:19–22,” in *Kyriakon: Festschrift Johannes Quasten*, vol. 1 (Munich: Aschendorff, 1970), 336–45. For Origen's contempt for animals, see Hobgood-Oster, *Holy Dogs and Asses*, 59, and Spittler, *Animals in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 39–42. For more on Origen's exegesis of Romans 8:19–23, see Alan Scott, *Origen and the Life of the Stars: A History of an Idea* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 147–48, and *passim* for the background of Origen's thought on stars. By the later Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas and William of Auvergne, among other theologians, argued that considering stars to be rational beings was a form of demon-worship: see Michael D. Bailey, “A Late-Medieval Crisis of Superstition?” *Speculum* 84 (2009): 648. Not all early commentary considered this verse a problem; Ambrosiaster, *Commentarius in Epistulas Paulinas. Part 1: In Epistulam ad Romanos*, ed. Henry Joseph Vogels (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1966), which primarily concerns itself with the cessation of corruption, is innocent of all controversy.

28. See the commentaries by Lanfranc, *PL* 150:132A–B; Hervé de Bourg-Dieu, *PL* 181:710D–11C; Hugh of St. Victor, *PL* 175:481D; William of St.-Thierry, *PL* 180:634D–635A; and Peter Lombard, *PL* 191:1442B–1444C.

ing all creation in themselves: like angels, they are rational; like animals, they can sense; like trees, they have a vital force without sensation, evident, for example, in the growth of hair. The coming perfection of humans will perfect the four elements as well: earth makes up human bodies; heat fuels bodily life and “light shines forth from our eyes”; air fills the lungs; and moisture constitutes blood.²⁹ Other exegesis even more strongly excludes animals from “delive[ry] from the servitude of corruption.” A late-antique commentary on the Epistles first explains that Paul’s promise of redemption applies only to humans and then reemphasizes human dominance of the world: “*Expectatio creaturae*, de rationi creatura sermonem fecit, et non sicut quidam existimant, de irrationali, vel insensibili, quae ad servitum hominum creata est” (“The expectation of the creature”: he said this about a rational creature, and not as some think, about an unreasoning creature, or an insensible one, created to serve man; *PL* 30: 683A).³⁰ Rabanus Maurus similarly expels animals from the community of the resurrected. First, he speaks about the traditional belief that resurrected humans would refill the celestial ranks emptied by the fallen angels (for example, see Augustine, *City of God* XXII.1). Then, he explains that the “*creaturam*, ut pote rationabilem, habere expectationem quamdam” (“the creature,” insofar as it is rational, has this expectation; *PL* 111:1454C); even if he were following the Origenist approach to celestial bodies, including the stars and moon in the promise of resurrection, he still excludes animals. Finally, Haymo of Auxerre, perhaps losing sight of the Origenist controversy, repeats the Augustinian line—humans “esse cum lapidibus, vivere cum arboribus, sentire et vivere cum animalibus; intelligere, id est rationabilitatem habere, cum angelis” (have being in common with stones, live in common with trees, sense and live in common with animals, understand, that is, have rationality, in common with angels; *PL* 117:432C–D)—but not before asserting, without any implicit or explicit reference to stars, the gross error of any reading of the passage that “comprehenderit . . . bestias” (included . . . beasts; *PL* 117:432B).³¹

29. For an intellectual history of the human as microcosm via the antique and medieval exegesis of Mark 16:15, see Richard C. Dales, “A Medieval View of Human Dignity,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 38 (1977): 557–72.

30. For more on this commentary, see Hermann Josef Frede, *Ein neuer Paulustext und Kommentar*, 2 vols. (Freiburg: Herder, 1974). The passage is identical in the *PL* and Frede’s edition.

31. The *PL* mistakenly ascribes this commentary to Haymo of Halberstadt. For more on the early tradition of commentary on this verse, see Pelagius, *Pelagius’s Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, ed. Theodore de Bruyn (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 110. A representative modern version of Haymo’s method can be found in Brendan Byrne, *Romans*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 255 and 259, which begins: “This small passage stands as one of the most singular and evocative texts in

Haymo, like Christian doctrine more generally, bound nonhuman worldly beings to the dying world from which humans would eventually escape. Yet despite this doctrine, animal resurrection stories abound in medieval Christian writings. The *Cursor Mundi* includes one of many medieval retellings of the further adventures of the rooster whose crowing shamed the apostle Peter. The rooster, dead and stewing, bursts from its pot when Judas declares that Jesus:

shal neuer ryse azeyn
trewly by no myȝt
Furst shal þis cok vpryse
was scalded ȝister nyȝt
Vnneþe had he seide þat word
þe cok took vp his flȝt
Feþered fairer þen biforn
crewe bi grace on hiȝt. (15985–93)³²

“shall never rise again, truly by no might. First shall this rooster rise up, which was scalded yesterday night.” Scarcely had he said this when the rooster took flight, feathered more fairly than before, and it crowed, through divine grace.

Other stories tell of Jesus resurrecting a fish,³³ or of Saint Columba resurrecting an ox out of the scraps left by a ravenous warrior, who had consumed it in one sitting;³⁴ or, in the lives of other Irish saints, Brigit and Finnian each

the whole Pauline corpus. Particularly distinctive is its apparent inclusion of the non-human created world (‘creation’) within the sweep of salvation. Not only is this unprecedented in Paul; from a contemporary perspective also it offers rich hermeneutic possibilities in view of current concern for the Earth.” Its conclusion, however, reads: “clearly, contemporary concern for the environment and well-being of the Earth outstrips the immediate intent of this passage. In itself it simply functions as a stage of Paul’s wider argument for hope. Moreover, its personification of non-rational creation and other mythic features lend it imaginative rather than argumentative appeal.”

32. Horrall, *Cursor Mundi*, vol. III, 15985–93. Other versions of this story appear in Geufroi de Paris, *La Passion des jongleurs*, ed. Anne Joubert Amari Perry (Paris: Editions Beauchesne, 1981), 37; Esther Casier Quinn, ed., *The Penitence of Adam: A Study of the Andrius ms. (Bibliothèque Nationale Fr. 95 Folios 380r–394v)* (Valencia: University of Mississippi Press, 1980), 91–92. Probably the most famous version of the story is the Portuguese national myth about the *Galo de Barcelos*.

33. Blangez, *Ci nous dit*, Vol. I, 58.

34. Dorothy Ann Bray, *A List of Motifs in the Lives of the Early Irish Saints* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1992), 179.

resurrecting sacrificed calves,³⁵ and Modwenna, in Geoffrey of Burton's life, refusing the gift of a slaughtered pig by reassembling and reviving it.³⁶ William of Canterbury's twelfth-century life of Thomas Becket, like a collection of the miracles of the English King Henry VI, also speaks of several animals resurrected through prayer.³⁷ None of these stories, however, record their animals as being resurrected to anything but another mortal existence. As soon as Columba returns the ox to life, hungry reapers kill and eat it; Modwenna gives the pig back to the slaughter-happy swineherd, who, misinterpreting the nuns' general prohibition against meat-eating as a distaste for pork, promptly returns with a stag's carcass; and, whatever its evangelical potency, Judas's rooster will presumably once more end its existence in the soup. Even in miracles, death swallows animals completely. This is an often repeated point of medieval Christian doctrine, as in Aquinas's *Summa contra Gentiles* II.82, which draws either directly from chapter 17 of the fifth-century *Liber de Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus* of Gennadius of Marseille (PL 42: 1216), or from the use of Gennadius in Section 48 of the anonymous, widespread Cistercian *Treatise on the Spirit and the Soul* (c. 1170), to assert that the souls of animals are not immortal, but rather "perish along with their bodies."³⁸ The conclusion to William of Canterbury's story of a sheep

35. Ibid., 197 and 228.

36. Geoffrey of Burton, *Life and Miracles of Saint Modwenna*, 41. For a version of this story in early 13th-century Anglo-Norman verse, see Alfred Thomas Baker and Alexander Bell, eds., *St. Modwenna* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1947), 758–92.

37. For example, a sheep, pig, and goose, in Robertson, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, vol. 1, 343 and 358–59. For a cow, Ronald Arbuthnott Knox and Shane Leslie, eds. and trans., *The Miracles of King Henry VI* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923), 132. For the sanctified Henry VI's brief but intense popularity, see Leigh Ann Craig, "Royalty, Virtue, and Adversity: The Cult of King Henry VI," *Albion* 35 (2003): 187–209. For more animal resurrection stories, see Alexander, *Saints and Animals*, *passim*, and Briony Aitchison, "Holy cow!: The Miraculous Cures of Animals in Late Medieval England," *European Review of History / Revue européenne d'histoire* 16 (2009): 875–92, to whose rich article I am indebted for directing me to the stories of Thomas Becket and Henry VI.

38. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*, trans. J. F. Anderson et al., 5 vols. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1955). For the *Treatise on the Spirit and the Soul*, trans. Erasmo Leiva and Benedicta Ward, see McGinn, *Three Treatises on Man*. For further examples, representing the typicality of such statements in doctrinal Christianity, see Athénagoras, *De resurrectione* 10.2, quoted in Spittler, *Animals in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, 34–35; Nemesius of Emesa, *On the Nature of Man*, 45, ("It is also peculiar to [the human] and exclusive that alone among the other animals his body rises after death and proceeds to immortality"); Aelred of Rievaulx, *Dialogue on the Soul*, 44–46, a twelfth-century work that relies on passages from, among others, Jerome and Gregory the Great; and several statements by William of Auvergne, thirteenth-century Bishop of Paris: *The Immortality of the Soul*, trans. Roland Teske (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1991), 32, and *The Soul*, trans. Roland Teske (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2000), 269–70. For a detailed discussion of these issues, with an emphasis on scholastic philosophy, see

restored to life puts it just as bluntly: “Non enim brutorum resurrectio credenda est” (the resurrection of beasts is not to be believed in). William does not mean to doubt the story he himself has just told; instead, he takes care not to use the word “resurrectio” to describe what the sheep experiences: it “reviveret” (revived) and “suscitavit” (awakened); like a bull resurrected by Saint Silvester, it is “ad vitam revocasse” (called back to life); its wounded flesh is “redintegrata” (made whole). Surely, as William explains, the revivification of animals can be believed in insofar as it helps humans believe in their own coming resurrection, but no one should believe in the afterlife of beasts: resurrection itself must be reserved exclusively to humans. Geoffrey of Burton constrains matters still further: when Modwenna restores a calf to a pauper who had slaughtered it for her, Geoffrey wonders whether she actually resurrected it. He concludes:

It is not important to determine whether [the calf] was the same one, which God miraculously brought back to life by His ineffable power, as he could certainly do if He wished, or whether, more likely, it was another one, either created from nothing or brought there from elsewhere, that was clothed in the same form and colour and fashioned along identical lines and of the same size.³⁹

Why should one miracle be “more likely” than another? Geoffrey judges it so because he prefers to think that God, thinking like he does, would judge the revivification of an animal doctrinally distasteful. To keep human particularity intact, Geoffrey prefers either to avoid thinking matters through too deeply—though he feels compelled to dilate on them—or else to limit his saint or God Himself to only another creation or even a kind of divine cattle rustling. In any case, he wants not to have had life returned to a creature that had lost it but rather to have provided yet another animal for human use.

The dominant strains of Christianity just as forcefully denied animals any authentic participation in the Christian community, either in this world or the next. In Caesarius of Heisterbach’s thirteenth-century *Dialogus Miraculorum*, several students play at being priests by baptizing a dog in a river. But Caesarius’s God, the God of Gennadius or Aquinas, will entertain none of this. Unlike the animals of the Acts of Philip, the dog, “virtutem tanti nominis sustinere non valens” (unable to bear the strength of such names), namely the “trini nominis” (three names) of the Trinity, turns rabid.⁴⁰ I offer

Santi, “L’animale eterno.”

39. Geoffrey of Burton, *Modwenna*, 115.

40. Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, ed. Joseph Strange, vol. 2 (Co-

two other wholly typical examples drawn from either end of the Middle Ages, the first from the fourth-century *Natalicia* of Paulinus of Nola, birthday poems to Saint Felix, and the other from a late fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century exempla collection by Heinemann of Bonn. The *Natalicia* teems with animal stories. In one, a cow hides in the woods, having escaped the Christians who swore it to sacrifice, but when it finally recalls its duty, it runs to the altar of Felix and gives its neck freely to the ax. Although Paulinus had already written that the cow “showed human intelligence, and acted as though aware that its life was in debt to a vow,” he concludes:

Why should all this have happened? Surely, as the Apostle puts it, God has no concern for cattle? No, the Maker who makes all things for us achieves all in all for us. Through ignorant cattle He performs signs which work on our behalf. By clear signals He works on brute minds to strengthen our faith and make us trust in the truth, so that men may be taught to loose their tongues in speech and tell of that Lord whom the dumb beasts proclaim by signs.⁴¹

Heinemann tells a story in which a heretic steals a Host and throws it into a pig trough. Rather than eating it, the pigs recognize and reverence their Creator. Retreating from the trough, they kneel and show, “tam vocis grunntu quam narium flatu, unanimiter sacramenti gloriam et hominis insaniam”⁴² (as much as with grunting as with blowing of their nostrils, the glory of the sacrament and insanity of men). Their piety might be recognized as evidence that pigs can have as direct relationship with God as humans do. But Heinemann does not write, “unanimiter sacramenti gloriam et *porcorum devotionem* [the devotion of pigs].” Heinemann has provided only yet another tale rebuking human piety by comparing it to the uninstructed devotion of irrational creation.⁴³ The very directness and sincerity of the pigs’ piety, in other words, far from joining them to humans as co-religionists, instead reveals them as merely animals, as—per Lacan’s ineradicable humanism—

logne: H. Lempertz & Co., 1851), Exemplum 45 at 249.

41. Paulinus of Nola, *The Poems of St. Paulinus of Nola*, trans. P. G. Walsh (New York: Newman Press, 1975), *Natalicium* 20, 172.

42. Henmannus of Bononiensis, *Das Viaticum narrationum*, ed. Alfons Hilka (Berlin: Weidmannsche buchhandlung, 1935), Tale 70 at 99.

43. For similar stories, see Alexander, *Saints and Animals*, 35–36, or Ross, *Middle English Sermons*, 129–30, where a dog refuses to eat the Host given to him by a Jew (“And anone þe dogge fell downe on all iiij knees and did as he couthe reuerence to þe Sacramente”), which should stir us to belief because “an vnresonable beeste so dud, þat neuer had techynge of holychurche.”

“lacking the lack,” and therefore as lacking the rational, voluntarist distance from their own piety that would save them from being exposed to the fate common to all domestic pigs.

Animals could have no piety of their own; they could not matter in themselves, but rather belonged entirely to humans; whatever they suffered or however they worshiped, they would be abandoned to mortality, to a death of such unimportance that humans would hardly consider it death, if death is understood not as the finitude of an individual subject but as a loss to a community: as I will point out later in this chapter, death counts *as* death when people take notice of it, in irreparable grief, in building monuments, in writing obituaries. A dialogue on theodicy in the *Elucidarium* exemplifies this point. When the student wonders why churches burn down, the master explains that God sends calamities to punish or to lead Christians to love him more: the implicit point, that suffering is both symptom and proof of moral significance, becomes evident when the student next asks, “Cum mors et aegritudo sint poenae peccati, cur haec patiuntur pecora, cum per discretionem peccare nesciant?” (Since death and sickness are punishment for sin, why do livestock suffer these things, since they do not know how to sin?; *PL* 172: 1140B–C). The Master explains, “Per ea homo punitur, cum eorum dolore vel morte in animo torquetur” (Man is punished by these things [viz., animal suffering], since from their sickness or death man is tormented in his soul). The student then wonders about wild animals, who fall sick and die without any humans knowing of it; the master explains that these deaths result from the corruption humans introduced into the world with their primordial sin. Domestic animals die to teach humans a lesson; wild animals die because of human frailty. In neither case do animals suffer or die for or because of themselves; in both cases, death arrives from, or is directed at, humans. Human needs and human actions dispossess animal of their lives, suffering, and death, rendering all of these only an anthropocentric instrument or effect.

The sharpest articulation of this condition appears in Aquinas. Amidst his consideration of whether resurrected people will eat after the resurrection, he explains, “Now this necessity [of eating] lasts as long as man’s animal life endures. But this life will cease in that final renewal of the universe, because the body will rise not natural but spiritual: hence animals and plants will also cease to exist then.”⁴⁴ Here, then, is the reason that

44. Thomas Aquinas, *On the Power of God (Quæstiones Disputatæ de Potentia Dei)*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 3 vols. (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1932), Bk 2, q. 5, a. 9. Aquinas also treats this issue in *ST* SS q. 91, a. 5, “Whether the plants and animals will remain in this renewal,” where he draws the same conclusion; for example, “Since the renewal of the world will be for man’s sake it follows that it should be

mainstream medieval Christian resurrection doctrine consigns animals to everlasting mortality. The confinement of animals to this mortal life confines them just as firmly to a purely instrumental existence, since, as Aquinas argues in *ST* 2a2ae, q. 25, a. 3, “Whether irrational creatures also ought to be loved out of charity,” humans extend charity to other humans in part because humans share an expectation of immortality. If charity is future-oriented, and animals have no true future, then animals can only be tools, to be treated “charitably,” as I explain later in this chapter, by being properly used. Animals, having no purpose in themselves, have no cause to exist once humans have sloughed off their reliance on other worldly beings. When humans rise into their undying identities in the afterlife, they will cease to need animals because they will need neither food, labor, nor the instruction they receive from animal suffering and death. At long last, humans can finally rest secure in an autonomous and lonely humanity.

Animal futures different from Aquinas’s can be imagined, whether for the Middle Ages or for a present that persists in thinking other beings as only instruments (consider, for example, the common argument that species diversity must be preserved from human rapaciousness, since the loss of species might mean the loss of some as yet undiscovered cure for [human] cancer). Such futures do not require severing any connection to an abandoned, benighted past; such a break is impossible. Yet a new future is still possible. In *The Parallax View*, Žižek argues that though a choice cannot break entirely with the past, it can still be called a choice, not a purely mechanistic effect of the past. For the past is heterogeneous, a place of conflict and opportunity, like the present. It does cause the present, but that cause does not exhaust the past’s resources. A free choice thus “changes the future by changing the past itself (in the Bergsonian sense of inserting a new possibility into it),” or, more simply, by reopening a route to a future that a particular choice had only apparently foreclosed.⁴⁵ Causes for new futures can be found in those pasts that could not help but imagine humans in a paradise shared with birds, grass, trees, or, for that matter, lions; in those exempla that picture, almost despite themselves, an unnameable *devotionem porcorum*; in those scriptures in which a baptized beast, a savior to an apostle, returns to its wilderness life, saved but indifferent to human society. Through all these pasts, humans might give themselves to another future in which no life or indeed no thing (if such a division can or should be sustained)⁴⁶ might be

conformed to the renewal of man.”

45. Žižek, *Parallax View*, 203.

46. See Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 144, whose well-known conclusion imagines a Parlia-

treated as a mere end. My epilogue tries to think through what such past possibilities might offer for a new and better way forward.

Even the most anthropocentric of doctrines could not close the door on the rest of the world so handily: it was no easy matter to ferry human souls safely alone to the afterlife. Some Christian scholars worried that humans might unwittingly smuggle animals within themselves, or that humans, like animals, might be left to molder in the dust of this mortal world. They imagined that humans who ate animals might be resurrected into hybrid bodies, partly human, partly animal, or, worse still, that by eating animals, humans might irredeemably pollute their own resurrectable flesh with the mortal flesh of animals and thus bar themselves altogether from the resurrection. Slaughter, consumption, and digestion, the very processes of violence through which humans most strenuously separate themselves from animals, threatened to entangle humans with animals, in eternal life or in unceasing death.

II.

Half Man, Half Pig?: Meat, Digestion, and the Resurrection of the Body

The human subjugation of animals allows humans to claim exclusive possession of reason and a set of qualities associated with this claim (language, free will, an immortal soul, and so on), since if animals also possessed any of these qualities, they could resist being dominated. The human subjugation of animals also allows humans to gloss their stereotypically upright posture as heaven-oriented and that of the animals as oriented towards base, worldly appetites. Yet bodily evidence for human distinctiveness stumbles over the obstacle that bodies, whether human or animal, are worldly, and, as such, grow and eat, die, rot, and turn to dust. What good is human bodily superiority if human and animal bodies eventually become indistinguishable from one another? Humans counteract this likeness by arguing for a key difference:

Nor does the earthly material from which mortal flesh is created perish in the sight of God, but whatever dust or ashes it may dissolve into, whatever vapors or winds it may vanish into, whatever other bodies or even elements it

ment of Things, in which the “ozone hole,” “the voters of New Hampshire,” and “meteorology of the polar regions” all have their voice.

may be turned into, by whatever animals or even men it may have been eaten as food and so turned into flesh, in an instant of time it returns to the human soul that first gave it life so that it might become human, grow, and live.⁴⁷

This assurance of the persistence and integrity of the human body through this (and the after-) life appears in Augustine's *Enchiridion*, but it could have been drawn from virtually any medieval explanation of Christian resurrection doctrine.⁴⁸ This is as true for the early medieval scholars as for later sophisticated reappraisals of the doctrine that threatened to dissolve the attachment between humans and any particular bodies. Many thirteenth-century scholars argued that the elements that made up the human body were not fundamentally associated with any one subject or even fundamentally human, but human only because they were ensouled by human souls.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, as Caroline Walker Bynum explains, because the medieval Christian self "is not a soul using a body but a psychosomatic entity, to which body is integral,"⁵⁰ and because this self in its entirety is destined for resurrection and eternal life, even thirteenth-century sophisticates, compelled at last to abandon their erudite explorations of the relationship of matter and self, argued, as did Bonaventure, "into whatever dust or ashes [human flesh] is turned . . . into the substance of whatever other bodies, or into the elements, or into whatever food, it will return, at that [last] moment of time, to the soul which animated it at first."⁵¹ Furthermore, Christian

47. Augustine, "Enchiridion," in *On Christian Belief*, ed. Boniface Ramsey, trans. Bruce Herbert, vol. 1/8, *The Works of St. Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2005), 88, 324–25.

48. For example, Peter Lombard's *Sentences* Bk. 4, D. 44.2 (PL 192: 946), which begins with this very passage. For other mainstream articulations of resurrection doctrine, from, respectively, the sixth and ninth centuries, see Gregory of Tours, *The History of the Franks*, trans. Lewis Thorpe (London: Penguin, 1974), 10.13, 560–66; and Jonas of Orleans, *De institutione laicali*, 3.16 (PL 106: 265B–66C, 268C–69A). Detailed histories can be found in Richard M. Grant, "The Resurrection of the Body," *Journal of Religion* 28 (1948): 120–30 and 188–209; and in Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

49. Bynum, *Resurrection*, 259–60.

50. *Ibid.*, 135.

51. *Sentences* commentary, bk. 4, dist. 43, q. 5, conclusion, p. 462, quoted in *ibid.*, 244. Aquinas similarly writes, in *ST* SS a. 79, q. 1, "Whether in the resurrection the soul will be reunited to the same identical body," "We cannot call it resurrection unless the soul returns to the same body. . . . [I]f it be not the same body which the soul resumes, it will not be a resurrection, but rather the assuming of a new body." This position was not always and everywhere the same. Bynum, *Resurrection*, 135 and 256, observes that Hugh of St. Victor and Robert of Melun could conceive of the person not as a psychosomatic unity but as "soul using a body." The positions of Origen and Eriugena were even less materialist, but such beliefs tended to be condemned as heretical (*ibid.*, 142–46). Note that the scripture itself is silent about the

scholars universally agreed that animal bodies and souls would come to nothing. Paulinus of Nola articulates the precepts of an argument repeated throughout the Christian Middle Ages:

Though we share with other breathing creatures the same substance of flesh, we are not at death's dissolution restored to nothingness as souls excluded because of the death of the flesh. No, when the trumpet sounds every region of earth will restore our bodies from their hidden seeds; our body, mind, soul will be joined in their compact with each other, and we shall be hailed before the Lord God in our wholeness.⁵²

Only animals really die, whereas death for humans is only a temporary interruption, the end of the capacity for humans to determine where they will spend eternity, an opportunity to solicit the assistance of the living, but nothing more.

The resurrection doctrine counteracted anti-Christian polemics such as that of Porphyry, who claimed that the destruction of the human body by beasts rendered resurrection impossible.⁵³ As the Christians argued, no shipwreck, rending in the arena, or burning at the stake, no putrefaction, desiccation, or dispersal could destroy the psychosomatic integrity of the human self. Coping with catastrophic change and the total disappearance of the body was simplicity itself for the doctrine, but for several twelfth- and thirteenth-century thinkers quotidian change before the cataclysm of the Last Judgment proved an almost insoluble problem.⁵⁴ For example, Master Martin's treatise on the resurrection concocted an argument in which the

carnes animalium et piscium qui conveniunt mensis hominum, transeunt in carne vescentium. Tota caro hominis resurget, ergo caro animalium huiusmodi facta humana resurget. Item transit caro hominis in carnem lupi et ita caro lupi resurget quia resurget caro hominis, quae in ea transivit.⁵⁵ meats of animals and fish that are fit for the table of humans turn into the flesh of the eaters. All human flesh will resurrect, therefore the flesh of these ani-

resurrection of the flesh, and some passages, such as Ecclesiastes 9:4–5, deny it altogether: for further discussion, see Grant, "Resurrection."

52. Paulinus of Nola, *Poems*, Poem 31, lines 303–10, 318–19.

53. Grant, "Resurrection," 94, citing material from Porphyry's *Against Christianity*.

54. For an extended discussion, see Philip Lyndon Reynolds, *Food and the Body: Some Peculiar Questions in High Medieval Theology* (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

55. Edited in Heinzmann, *Die Unsterblichkeit der Seele und die Auferstehung des Leibes*, 181. This may be the same person as Martinus de Fugeriis; see Gary Macy, "A Guide to Thirteenth-Century Theologians," <http://home.sandiego.edu/~macy>

mals, having been made human, will resurrect. Also, human flesh crosses over into the flesh of a wolf [that has eaten a human] and thus the flesh of the wolf will resurrect since the flesh of the human, which has crossed over into the wolf, will resurrect.

Other scholars of this era imagined similar scenarios. In his commentary on the *Sentences*, Peter of Poitiers suggested that someone might say that a man “qui devoratus est a lupo, et transit caro hominis in carnem lupi, et ita resurget et caro lupi et resurget etiam caro hominis quae in eam transierat” (who was devoured by a wolf, and the flesh of the man turns into the flesh of the wolf, and thus [that] both the flesh of the wolf and the flesh of the man that turns into him will resurrect; *PL* 211: 1264D). Gilbert of Poitiers argued that if what humans ate turned into human flesh, then “caro porcina tunc resurgeret”⁵⁶ (pig flesh would resurrect); and an anonymous twelfth-century *Summa* wondered whether “homo comedens ferinam carnem eam in suam carnem convertit et econverso fera comedens carnem humanam et ita caro ferae in humanam conversa vel ex humana confecta resurget”⁵⁷ (a man, in eating beast flesh, turns it into his own flesh and conversely a beast eating human flesh turns it into its own flesh, and thus the flesh of a beast having been converted into human flesh or having been made human will resurrect). The verbs describe lives not returned to separate existences in the resurrection, but rather ineluctably combined through digestion: *facere*, *confacere*, *convertere*, and *transire*. Humans would have to share their resurrected bodies with the creatures they had eaten or that had eaten them. This would be an afterlife either populated by humans and animals both, or, more horrifying, one of humans and animals conjoined in monstrous assemblages of eater and eaten.

This last option may not even be the worst, as the “chain consumption” problem suggests that some unfortunate humans might not be able to resurrect at all. Typical chain consumption scenarios, in which a human is eaten by an animal that, often, is then eaten by another animal, appear in Gregory the Great’s *Homilies on Ezekiel* (*PL* 76 1032C–D); in Honorius of Autun’s *Elucidarium* (*PL* 172: 1164D) and its many vernacular translations; and in a seventh-century florilegium of Augustine’s works, the *Prognosticon*

56. Nicholas M. Häring, “Die Sententie Magistri Gisleberti Pictavensis Episcopi (II). Die Version der Florentiner Handschrift,” *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 46 (1979): 102. Reynolds, *Food and the Body*, 37–38 n37 summarizes this work’s manuscript tradition. Gilbert was a student of Anselm of Laon and, after working successively in Chartres and Paris, became Bishop of Poitiers in 1142.

57. Edited in Heinzmann, *Die Unsterblichkeit der Seele und die Auferstehung des Leibes*, 211.

of Julian of Toledo (*PL* 96: 510D–511C), which was adapted into Anglo-Norman verse in the thirteenth century. Even had the chain consumption argument not been a common topic in Latin doctrinal writing, its appearance in vernacular works argues for its not being only an esoteric concern. In the Anglo-Norman adaptation, a student wonders whether a man who has been hanged, quartered, and then eaten by a dog will be resurrected, since the human body has clearly become conjoined to the dog.⁵⁸ The student's master attacks his disciple for daring to question God's might: "Devom nus demander reson / Coment Dieus celes choses fet? / Ce est outrage e forfeit!" (should we ask for an explanation for how God did these things? This is an outrage and an enormity!; 1745–47). Nonetheless the master counters with a story of his own in which a "clerc soutil" (sophistical scholar) tries to confound Gregory the Great with an even more outrageous scenario: instead of a corpse eaten by a hungry dog, a living man walking in the woods is killed by a wolf, which is in turn killed and eaten by a lion, which itself dies shortly afterwards:

La charoine del leoun jut
 E porri tote, a devint terre:
 Ou porreit l'en cest homme querre?
 Sachez, por veirs, je ne crei mie
 Ke cil relieve de mort en vie,
 Kar nul desseverer ne porreit
 Le terre que de homme esteit
 De cele que bestes devint! (1779–86)

The carcass of the lion lay on the ground and entirely rotted and turned to earth: where could one seek the man in here? Know, indeed, that I do not believe at all that this man could be recuperated from death into life, because nothing can divide the earth that was the man from that which became the beasts!

But Gregory "cele folour confoundi" (refuted this folly; 1789) by declaring that humans do, in fact, always return with all their limbs intact. The master then tells the student that if the human subject can survive such misfortune, then *a fortiori* it could survive being consumed by only one animal: the problem has been solved, but not, it should be said, without some impatience.

58. Adrien Bonjour, ed., *Dialogue de Saint-Julien et son disciple: poème anglo-normand du XIIIe siècle* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1949). The work is extant in three manuscripts, one of them fragmentary, all dating from the early fourteenth or late thirteenth centuries.

In this, the dramatized Gregory of the Anglo-Norman dialogue echoes the actual Gregory, whose *Homilies on Ezekiel* scorned those “objicere inanem quaestiunculam solent” (in the habit of throwing out an inane little question [about, among others, chain consumption]). Each work insists that the problem must be understood as beneath contempt, that certain operations of reason lead to irrational, silly, even dangerous thoughts: per the anonymous twelfth-century Summa, “melius est enim esse simplicem catholicum quam disertum haereticum”⁵⁹ (better to be a simple catholic than an eloquent heretic). To preserve the human, these works limit inquiry into the possibility of a human subject too deeply mixed with the mortal, changeable world, even as their very prohibitions of inquiry imply that they suspect the human cannot be of the world and still remain human.⁶⁰

Notably, resurrection doctrine did not concern itself with humans who might resurrect as partly bread, wine, vegetable, or fruit, the primary nourishment, at least ideally, of the clergy authoring doctrinal treatises; it concerned itself only with meat. Humans are only metaphorically like wheat (see, for example, 1 Corinthians 15:37); but their bodies, like those of animals, are literally flesh. The resurrection should efface this similarity, but it would fail as an ultimate guarantee of difference between humans and nonhumans if the doctrinal worries about digestion proved justified. Then humans eaten by animals might be digested into animal flesh and thus be “restored to nothingness,” unable to resurrect, or else animals that were eaten by or ate humans could enter into eternity and escape the nothingness that is their proper lot. If either happened, or if humans entered eternity as hybrid human-animals, then, to quote once more the question from the *Dialogue of St. Julian*, “Ou porreit l’en cest homme querre?” With every bite, the human would gradually meld with the animal and be given over to death or, at best, would lose the specificity and the supposed benefits and rights of its human existence. If the human so linked with animals did not resurrect, there would indeed be no difference, as the Cistercian Hélinand of Froidmont wrote in his late twelfth-century *Vers de la mort*, “Entre ame a homme et ame a truie” (between a man’s and sow’s soul), no need to scorn those who “s’abandonne a folie” (abandon themselves to debauchery),⁶¹ no

59. Heinzmann, *Die Unsterblichkeit der Seele und die Auferstehung des Leibes*, 211.

60. I draw this idea from the call in Slavoj Žižek, “Bring Me My Philips Mental Jacket: Improve Your Performance!” *London Review of Books*, May 22, 2003, *contra* Jürgen Habermas and Francis Fukuyama, for biogenetic intervention and deep investigations into the human genome, even if such scientific work destroys longstanding metaphysical conceptions of choice and the “free” human subject. Žižek here belongs to the Enlightenment project as described by Kant: “aude sapere” (dare to know).

61. For a similar statement, from the late 1220s or early 1230s, see William of Auvergne,

need—although this point is only implicit in Hélinand’s text—not to treat humans as instrumentally as sows were treated. If on the other hand animals so linked with humans did resurrect, then Hélinand’s scorn for sows, and the system of the human supported by his scorn, would in turn have to be abandoned. There is still another problem. If human subjugation of animals produces the human, there is no essential human identity; there is only a fundamental conflict, or, more accurately, no foundation at all. It might be expected that the conflict between human and animal could end in the next life, where humans, having finally assumed perfected bodies, will be freed from the threat of worldly flux and especially of the need to dominate animals. This peaceful end might be understood as the point when the human at long last comes into its own. But if the meat-eating by which the human most forcefully asserts and constructs its humanity contaminates its perfected body, if the meat humans eat resurrects with them, then that struggle will be marked on the human body for eternity. Rather than finally arriving at an identity, the human will permanently display a corporeal reminder of the systemic and irreducible antagonism of the human. The truth of human nature—its contingency, its inessential relationality—will be irrepressible.

Christian thinkers countered this truth of human nature by proposing another: only what belonged to what they called the *veritas humanae naturae*, “the truth of human nature,” would resurrect. In effect, this clarification set aside a discrete portion of the human body as essentially human, rendering the rest of the body a kind of inhuman supplement unfit for resurrection, associated rather than joined with what was truly human. The aforementioned anonymous twelfth-century Summa, after wondering whether animals might resurrect, explains, “Respondeo nec caro humana ferinam nec econverso convertitur, sed una altera fovetur et crescit” (I answer that neither human flesh turns into that of a wild beast nor the other way around, but one nourishes the other and makes it grow). As proof, it first quotes Matthew 15:17, “Do you not understand, that whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the privy?”⁶² and then suggests that

The Immortality of the Soul, 25, “For if the human soul would not live after this life, it would be vain and pointless to serve God here. After all, in this life the worship of God and religion involves much torment and affliction for the soul, and after this life there would be no reward for it, since there would not even be life for the human soul after this life. Accordingly, it would be more advantageous for the human soul utterly to deny God and to give itself over to every vanity and pleasure than to live a holy and just life and to worship the Creator with due honor and devotion.”

62. This is one of the standard proof texts for this position. The others include God’s creation of Eve from Adam’s rib, the feeding of the five thousand from the five loaves, and the resurrection of infants into adult bodies; for example, Häring, “Die Sententie Magistri Gisleberti Pictavensis,” 102.

food disappears from the body through defecation, urination, sweat, “sive alio modo” (or some other way). As if not entirely sure of the validity of the Matthew passage, it then adds, “Vel licet altera in alteram convertatur, non tamen in veritatem humanae naturae vel econverso” (Or, if it is allowed that one is converted into another, it is not however converted into the truth of human nature or the other way around).⁶³ Finally, as if unwilling to explore any further complications to the problem of digestion and growth, that is, as if eluding the dangers of thinking any further, it concludes, “Vel etiam si convertantur dominus novit unam ab altera in resurrectione secernere”⁶⁴ (Or, however, if they are converted the Lord will know one from another and in the resurrection will separate them). Other scholars intervened in the problem more confidently. Peter of Poitiers writes, “nec ideo transit cibus in carnem hominis sicut testantur physici; vel si forte in eam transit, non in illam quae est de veritate humanae naturae, et quae in futuro iudicio resurget” (nor therefore does food turn into human flesh as the natural scientists claim; or, if perhaps it turns into human flesh, it does not turn into that which is of the truth of human nature, which will resurrect in the future judgment; PL 211: 1265A). Using virtually the same words, Master Martin explains that “nec ideo cibus transit in carnem hominis, ut asserit physicus; vel si forte transit, tamen in ea quae est de veritate humanae naturae non transit”⁶⁵ (nor therefore does food turn into human flesh, as natural science asserts; or, if perhaps it turns into human flesh, however it does not turn into that which is the truth of human nature). Drawing on works such as Hugh of St. Victor’s *De Sacramentis*, Peter Lombard similarly argued that the human body receives “help from foods but foods are not converted into human substance.”⁶⁶ Despite Gilbert of Poitiers’ worries, pig flesh would not resurrect, because humans would be unchanged by—it might be said, defended from—their own eat-

63. Reynolds, *Food and the Body*, 61 n31, which discusses a similar point in Peter of Poitiers’ *Sentences* commentary, is applicable here: “Peter seems to presuppose that wolves do not truly assimilate food either, so that there is there a [sic] truth of lupine nature. But if so, one could not define it by reference to the resurrection.”

64. Heinzmann, *Die Unsterblichkeit der Seele und die Auferstehung des Leibes*, 211.

65. Ibid., 181. For a later version, quoted in *ibid.*, 202, see Peter of Capua (d. 1242), “Cibi autem non convertuntur in veritatem humanae naturae licet forte convertantur in carnem humanam quia aliqua caro est in homine quae non est de veritate humanae naturae” (Foodstuffs are not turned into the truth of human nature, although perhaps they are turned into human flesh, because some human flesh is not of the truth of human nature).

66. Quoted in Bynum, *Resurrection*, 125. For the analogous passage, see Hugh of St. Victor, *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith (De Sacramentis)*, trans. Roy Deferrari (Cambridge, MA: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1951), 123, where he argues that Eve was, as the Bible says, made from the rib alone, and from nothing extraneous, and likewise, we were all formed out of the tiny seed of Adam.

ing. While this solution required that human growth take place miraculously rather than naturally, while it cut off the essentially human from any true alimentary interaction with the world, it had the advantage of simplicity on other points: nothing significant and lasting in the human body was subject to change, and nothing animal could ever resurrect.

Another doctrinal strain, which would become dominant in the thirteenth century, promoted a natural rather than miraculous explanation for human growth by dispensing with the division between the truth of human nature and the rest of the body. This conclusion preserved human integrity by arguing that what humans ate and digested became human flesh. Thus the anonymous treatise *De novissimus* (On the Last Days) argues:

Dicunt enim quidam impossibile ut porcina caro clarificetur in die iudicii et regnum Dei possideat. Soluunt qui tenent sententiam: dicunt enim porcina carnem iam non porcina sed in humanam substantiam transformatam resuscitari nullum esse inconueniens, sicut limus terre non simpliciter limus sed in humanam formam transfiguratus resurget in Adam.

They said that it is impossible that pork flesh will be perfected in the Day of Judgment and possess the Kingdom of Heaven. They solve it by asserting this opinion: they say that pork is not pork but is transformed into human substance, not unsuitable to be resurrected, just as the mud of the earth is not simply mud, but, having been transfigured into the human form, will arise with Adam.⁶⁷

And in *Summa Theologica* SS q. 80, a. 4, “Whether whatever in the body belonged to the truth of human nature will rise again in it,” Aquinas, like *De novissimus*, asserts that “although that part of matter which at one time was under the form of bovine flesh rises again in man under the form of human flesh, it does not follow that the flesh of an ox rises again, but the flesh of a man: else one might conclude that the clay from which Adam’s body was fashioned shall rise again.”

Both systems had in common an insistence that animal violence against humans could do no lasting harm and that animal acts and animal appetites, like animal bodies, are from their very beginning given over to death. If, per Honorius of Autun’s solution to the problem of chain consumption: “Quod fuit caro hominis resurget; quod bestiarum remanet” (What was the flesh of men shall resurrect; what was of beasts shall remain; *PL* 172: 566A), then

67. Edited in Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles*, vol. 5 (Louvain: Abbaye du Mont César, 1942), 396.

anthropophagous animals at worst could only store the human temporarily until God comes to retrieve it.⁶⁸ This point appears in Christian writing as early as that of Paulinus of Nola, who asserts it with unusual vehemence and specificity:

If a corpse has been devoured, the animals after digesting their food restore the limbs to earth wherever they purge themselves. In such cases, there is the transfusion of the human body from one not its own, but without loss of the potentiality of its own species. Even though bodies have been transferred to the earth from the bodies of beasts, they remain unaffectedly human with the seed alive in them. When a beast dies after chancing to feast on a human corpse, the reason remains apart from it; man is a rational animal, and accordingly in his very body he is superior to and king over other bodies. So, though he can be given as booty to dumb animals, he refuses to share their lot. So only that flesh which was the vessel of the rational soul will experience the power of resurrection, so that when the soul returns to earth the flesh may renew its physique and receive it in an imperishable garment.⁶⁹

In both systems, humans could injure without being injured; they were at once violent and invulnerable, like the fantasy of the “violent and self-centered” invulnerable subject described by Judith Butler, which I discussed in my previous chapter. Furthermore, if human slaughter and consumption of animals could transform animals into human flesh, as in digestive systems unreliant on *veritas humanae naturae*, then human violence did not just split humans off from their ties to the rest of the world by asserting a fundamental human invulnerability and total vulnerability of the world to humans. Human violence could cause animals to disappear into human flesh while augmenting it.⁷⁰ In this model, as in so many models of violence and domi-

68. For another discussion of animals, anthropophagy, and Christian resurrection doctrine, see Cătălin Avramescu, *An Intellectual History of Cannibalism*, trans. Alistair Ian Blyth (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 126–35.

69. Paulinus of Nola, *Poems*, Poem 31, lines 271–302, 318.

70. This dynamic may be compared to the thirteenth-century Iberian kabbalist Joseph Gikatilla’s explanation of how God can simultaneously be merciful and require the sacrifice of animals. By consenting to be sacrificed (as they did in Eden) and consumed by humans, animals enable the exchange of their beastly substance for something better: “Whenever a human being eats a portion of the portions of a beast, it turns into a portion of the human being. Here the beast is transformed into a person, and her slaughter is an act of mercy, for she leaves the torah of beasts and enters into the torah of human beings. Death is life for it, in that it ascends to the degree of angels—and this is the secret of ‘Man and beast the Lord will save’ [Ps. 36:8]”; see Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus, “Meat-Eating and Jewish Identity: Ritualization

nation, one kind of violence, that of humans, can form, defend, and expand polities, including the little polity of the human body, and the other kind of violence, that of animals (and animalized humans), can only temporarily disturb the smooth workings of the reasonable polity before being put down, either by the agents of law or by the inescapably destructive force of its own irrational energies.

III.

How Delicious We Must Be

Frank fed us human meat, and we got the hunger. That's how you become a cannibal, Dee. You get one taste of delicious, delicious human meat, none of this stuff ever satisfies you.⁷¹

Nearly two thousand years ago in Jerusalem, during Titus's siege, robbers emptied a rich woman's house of all she had, including her remaining food. According to the *Golden Legend*, the woman, in her despair, "strangled her son, had him cooked, ate half of his body, and hid the other half. But when robbers smelled the odor of the cooked meat, they burst in and threatened the woman with death if she did not give up her store of meat."⁷² When she produced her son's half-eaten body, the robbers froze in horror, repulsed as much by the infanticide as by their own confusion of human for animal flesh.⁷³ Human flesh smells like meat because it is meat. According to some

of the Priestly 'Torah of Beast and Fowl' (Lev 11:46) in Rabbinic Judaism and Medieval Kabbalah," *AJS Review* 24 (1999): 229 n4. Gikatilla's contemporary Bahya ben Asher limits the capacity to transform animal meat into intelligent soul to Torah scholars, that is, those humans capable of metaphysical thinking; see *ibid.*, 233–34.

71. Fred Savage, "Mac and Dennis: Manhunters," *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* (FX, 2008). I thank Mike Smith for introducing me to this episode.

72. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, vol. 1 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 276, in the life of the apostle James. The story appears first in Josephus's *Jewish War* and appears in various vernacular accounts of the first-century siege of Jerusalem. For a rich discussion of the various textual histories of this woman, Mary or Maria of Jerusalem, see Merrall Llewelyn Price, *Consuming Passions: The Uses of Cannibalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 65–81. The story originates in Josephus or, just as well, in Leviticus 26:27–29, Deuteronomy 28:53–57, Lamentations 4:10, or 2 Kings 6:28–29.

73. For anthropophagy as a historiographic topos of famine, see Julia Marvin, "Cannibalism as an Aspect of Famine in Two English Chronicles," in Carlin and Rosenthal, *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, 73–86; Bonnassie, "Consommation d'aliments immondes," 1046–50; Herman Pleij, *Dreaming of Cockaigne: Medieval Fantasies of the Perfect Life*,

medieval natural science, the difference between human and animal flesh is one of degree, not of kind: human flesh differs from other meats only in its relative coldness or dryness.⁷⁴ The indiscernibility between human and animal flesh is especially striking in the great famine set-piece of Raoul Glaber's eleventh-century history, in which one man sells cooked human flesh in the marketplace of Tournus "ac si fruissent alicuius pecudis"⁷⁵ (as if it were some manner of livestock). The authorities arrest and burn the vendor and bury the confiscated human flesh, transforming what had temporarily been a carcass back into a corpse through funeral and legal rituals. But these rituals cannot wholly erase the event of human flesh sold as meat: this may have been an illegal, abominable ware, but because it is edible, Raoul's story confesses the inherent meatiness of all humans. Notably, when a father who had killed and eaten his own daughter begged Innocent III for a suitable penance, the pope enjoined him "nunquam *de caetero* carnibus pro quacunque necessitate vesceretur" (never again to eat *other* meats for whatever necessity; PL 214:1063D–64B; my emphasis).

Nonetheless, medieval texts attest that even before the resurrection human flesh possesses one distinguishing characteristic: it is the best of meats, the most restorative, most delicious, and most desirable. In Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*, King Cadwallo, driven into exile by his brother Edwin, lands on the Isle of Guernsey and, in his grief, refuses to eat until someone can provide him with venison. Cadwallo's beloved nephew, Brian, fails in his hunt, but rather than return with nothing, he slices off and roasts a piece of his own thigh and serves it to his uncle, who finds the flesh sweeter than any he had ever tasted before ("tantum dulcedinem in aliis carnibus non reperisset").⁷⁶ The singular deliciousness

trans. Diane Webb (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 109–12 and 116–17.

74. Phyllis Pray Bober, *Art, Culture, and Cuisine: Ancient and Medieval Gastronomy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 245. For a similar observation, see Cohen, *Medieval Identity Machines*, 75: "Whereas Augustine saw the line between animal and human as inviolable, as far as this Galenic body is concerned there is no difference between human and animal flesh." Note that 1 Corinthians 15:39 ("All flesh is not the same flesh: but one is the flesh of men, another of beasts, other of birds, another of fishes") might have prompted a discussion of the differences between human and animal flesh, but the usual exegesis remarks only on distinctions among resurrected humans, which will be like the differences in brightness among celestial bodies: e.g., Peter Lombard's commentary on 1 Corinthians (PL 191:1685D–1686C). Haymo of Auxerre (PL 117: 600B, mistakenly ascribed to Haymo of Halberstadt) is rare in discussing a material difference between kinds of flesh: he explains that although all flesh is one, birds were made from air, humans from earth, and fish from flowing water.

75. Rodulfus Glaber, *Historium libri quinque*, IV.10, 188–89.

76. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, ed. Michael D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2007), 267.

of the flesh attests to the special relationship between Brian and Cadwallo, to the nobility of Brian's corporeal sacrifice, but also to the inferiority of animal to human flesh. Cadwallo's enjoyment is matched by the other, rare medieval descriptions of the taste of human flesh. In the Middle English romance *Richard Coer de Lyon*, Richard's men trick an ailing Richard, who yearns for pork, into eating the spiced body of a "yonge and ffat" (young and fat; 3088) Saracen. Though "hys ffolk hem tournyd away and lough" (his folk turned away and laughed; 3114), Richard eats and regains his health and vigor.⁷⁷ In the *Chanson d'Antioche*, the starving rabble among the crusaders discover human flesh to be a delicacy: "Mius vaut que cars de porc ne cars de cerf lardés. / Nule cars de porcel ne poroit ester tés"⁷⁸ (It is better than pork or fat venison. No piglet's flesh could be as good as this; 4985–86). Marco Polo reports that the Japanese think human flesh "the choicest of all foods,"⁷⁹ and John Mandeville that the people of Lamore "wele gladly etyn manys flesch more than ony othir flesch" (will gladly eat man's flesh more than any other flesh), despite their wealth and the ready availability of other kinds of meat.⁸⁰ In one of Poggio Bracciolini's tales, a teenage serial killer, "fassus est se plures alios comedis, idque se agere, quoniam sapid-

77. Karl Brunner, ed., *Der mittenglische Versroman über Richard Löwenherz: kritische Ausgabe nach allen Handschriften mit Einleitung, Anmerkungen und deutscher Übersetzung* (Wien: W. Braumüller, 1913). The many studies of this text published since 1999 customarily treat Richard's appetite as a political metaphor.

78. Jan A. Nelson, ed., *La Chanson d'Antioche* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003). For more texts like this, see Jill Tattersall, "Anthropophagi and Eaters of Raw Flesh in French Literature of the Crusade Period: Myth, Tradition, and Reality," *Medium Aevum* 57 (1988): 240–53. For a recent attempt to determine the story's truth, including whether crusaders were anthropophagous only at Ma'aara or also at Antioch and other places, see Jay Rubenstein, "Cannibals and Crusaders," *French Historical Studies* 31 (2008): 525–52. I have examined all the first crusade narratives Rubenstein discusses; while a few others record anthropophagy and condemn it, only the *Chanson d'Antioche* describes the taste of human flesh. Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana: History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, ed. and trans. Susan Edgington (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 375, reports that "the Christians did not shrink from eating not only killed Turks or Saracens, but even dogs," oddly presenting caninophagy as more horrifying than anthropophagy. Ralph of Caen, *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen: A History of the Normans on the First Crusade*, trans. Bernard S. Bachrach and David Stewart Bachrach (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005), 116, perhaps recalls cynocephali lore in its condemnation: "in devouring them [i.e., the "gentiles"], the Christians looked like wild beasts, like dogs roasting men." I use the words "anthropophagy/anthropophage" instead of "cannibalism/cannibal" not only because of the roots of the word "cannibal" in colonialism and genocide, but also because my discussion considers human-eating animals (who could hardly be called "cannibals").

79. Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, trans. Ronald Latham (New York: Penguin, 1958), 248.

80. M. C. Seymour, ed., *The Bodley Version of Mandeville's Travels*, EETS o. s. 253 (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 97.

iores reliquis carnibus viderentur”⁸¹ (confessed that he had eaten many other [children], and that he had done this because they seemed tastier to him than any other flesh). The fifteenth-century hunting manual of Edward of York observes that “man’s flesh is so savory and so pleasant that when [wolves] have taken to man’s flesh they will never eat the flesh of other beasts, though they should die of hunger.”⁸² In *Summa Theologica*, 2a2ae q. 147, a. 8, “Whether it is fitting that those who fast should be bidden to abstain from flesh meat, eggs, and milk foods,” Aquinas himself hints at the particular delight of anthropophagy by explaining that the flesh of quadrupeds should not be eaten during Lent because their bodily similarities to humans makes them more pleasurable and more nourishing to eat, which in turn “results [in] a greater surplus available for seminal matter, which when abundant becomes a great incentive to lust.”⁸³ If the consumption of the flesh of quadrupeds has such effects for such causes, anthropophagy must be a very great pleasure indeed.

Why should human flesh be thought to taste so good? Maybe because it did taste good. Postmedieval records of anthropophagy describe it as tasting like pork, beef, tuna, veal, cheese, or, according to Guy de Maupassant, who ate a piece of human flesh during a dissection, as having no flavor at all.⁸⁴

81. Poggio Bracciolini, *Facezie*, ed. Eugenio Garin, trans. Marcello Ciccuto (Milan: Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, 1994), CLXXI, “Horribile de puero qui infantulos comedebat.” Anders Thomas Jensen, *The Green Butchers (De Grønne Slagtere)* (Newmarket Films, 2003) is one of several modern versions of such stories.

82. Edward of Norwich, *The Master of Game*, ed. William A. Baillie-Grohman and Florence Baillie-Grohman (London: Ballantyne, Hanson & Co., 1904), 60. For a modern version of this idea, see Emily Dickinson, *The Complete Poems*, ed. Thomas H. Johnson (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1960), #872, where a tiger, upon first eating a human, “Grows a fiercer thing / Till he esteem his Dates and Cocoa / A Nutrition mean.”

83. For the development of the notion of that meat-eating inspires lust, see Boulc’h, “Le statut de l’animal,” 44, and for a later developments, Julia Twigg, “Vegetarianism and the Meanings of Meat,” in *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the Sociological Significance of Food*, ed. Anne Murcott (Aldershot: Gower, 1983), 25, which cites the opinion of the late-nineteenth-century vegetarian Edward Carpenter that animal food “‘containing as it does highly wrought organic forces, may liberate within our system powers we may find difficult or even impossible to dominate.’”

84. For Guy de Maupassant, see Wilhelm Stekel, “Cannibalism, Necrophilism, and Vampirism,” in *Sadism and Masochism*, trans. Louise Brink (New York: Grove, 1965), 305. Stekel’s analysis exemplifies the common conviction that anthropophagy in “modern” societies represents a return of the primitive repressed. Issei Sagawa, a graduate student in literature at the Sorbonne who in 1981 murdered and ate his classmate Renée Hartevelt, described her flesh as tasting like tuna. For beef, see Gananath Obeyesekere, *Cannibal Talk: The Man-Eating Myth and Human Sacrifice in the South Seas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 139, and pork, in the same book, 28. For veal, see William Seabrook, *Jungle Ways* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1931), 173; and for beef and cheese, see Piers Paul Read, *Alive: The Story of the Andes Survivors* (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott, 1974), 198

But like most accounts of the practice, medieval records of anthropophagy rely only on hearsay;⁸⁵ claims for the flavor are not empirical, then, but rather help to portray anthropophagy as unusual, shocking, or desirable. The many psychoanalytic critical readings of anthropophagy therefore provide a readier approach than “straight belief” for explaining the purported deliciousness of human flesh. Freud’s myth of the origins of the superego in anthropophagy would explain that whatever is most prohibited—paradigmatically, incest and anthropophagy—must be a sign of pure id unconstrained by or overthrowing paternal/cultural constraints;⁸⁶ readings inspired by Klein rather than by Freud would see anthropophagy, whether literal or metaphorical, as repairing the trauma of the distinction of the world from the self.⁸⁷ Political readings, inspired by the common medieval troping of tyranny as anthropophagy, would explain its pleasure as a pleasure of unlimited political might, or, using Kristeva, would regard the intense pleasure of anthropophagy as representing the disgusting, disordered pleasures that must be repressed and abjected (onto “primitives” or tyrants, for example)

and 199. For further discussion (which skips the Middle Ages) of the legendary taste and nutritiousness of human flesh, see Avramescu, *History of Cannibalism*, 171-73.

85. This point appears as early as Herman Melville, *Typee*, *The Writings of Herman Melville* 1 (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 234, whose narrator observes, “It is a singular fact, that in all our accounts of cannibal tribes we have seldom received the testimony of an eye-witness to the revolting practice. The horrible conclusion has always been derived either from the second-hand evidence of Europeans, or else from the admissions of the savages themselves, after they have in some degree become civilized.” For the foundational critique of credulous acceptance of reports of cultural anthropophagy, see William Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979). See also the restatements and refinements of his position in William Arens, “Cooking the Cannibals,” in *Consuming Passions: Food in the Age of Anxiety*, ed. Jennifer Wallace and Sian Griffiths (Manchester: Mandolin, 1998), 156-66; and “Rethinking Anthropophagy,” in Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, and Margaret Iversen, eds., *Cannibalism and the Colonial World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 39-62. For a survey of the debates, see Lawrence Osborne, “Does Man Eat Man? Inside the Great Cannibalism Controversy,” *Lingua Franca* April/May (1997): 28-38; and Peter Hulme, “Introduction: The Cannibal Scene,” in Barker, Hulme, and Iversen, *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, 1-38, who corrects Arens’s frequently intemperate critics. More recently, see the first chapter, “Anthropophagy and the Man-Eating Myth,” in Obeyesekere, *Cannibal Talk*.

86. See the anthropophagic myth of the origin of the superego in Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement Between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Routledge, 2001), 164-69, repeated in *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (New York: Knopf, 1939), 130-33.

87. The most ambitious use of Melanie Klein’s theories of the anthropophagic imagination is Maggie Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Consumption* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990). Also see Alex Blumstein, “Masochism and Fantasies of Preparing to be Incorporated,” *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 7 (1959): 292-98.

for normative subjects to solidify the boundaries of their identities.⁸⁸ But to understand anthropophagy as a concretized metaphor for dynamics of interiority, exteriority, and incorporation, or as a metaphor for ethnic, political, or familial fantasies, is to treat the symbolism of anthropophagy without coming to terms with the act of meat-eating itself.⁸⁹ To be sure, meat-eating is also a symbolic act, but because it generally requires the end of a life, and always requires some degree of dismemberment or excision, it is not only symbolic. While many medieval works consider the slaughter, butchery, and consumption of animals, they generally do so to guide cooking, to organize human labor, to help keep cities clean, or to encourage Christians to tame their flesh by temporarily curtailing their consumption of meat.⁹⁰ Virtually no medieval work pays any attention to the lives animals lose in becoming meat. Only anthropophagy, a subjectively violent assault on the objectively violent status quo, might inspire horror or obsessional appetites. Modern studies of anthropophagy, to the degree that they replicate these medieval silences and differential attentions, may justly be accused of parochialism, or of what Richard Ryder in 1970 termed “speciesism,” since, like their medieval forebears, they attend only to that subset of carnivorousness that

88. For anthropophagy in *Richard Coeur de Lyon* as “Christian military-gustatory aggression,” and thus as a political pleasure, see Geraldine Heng, *Empire of Magic: Medieval Romance and the Politics of Cultural Fantasy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 73. For tyranny troped as anthropophagy, see Philippe Buc, *L'Ambiguïté du Livre: prince, pouvoir, et peuple dans les commentaires de la Bible au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1994), 206–31; Nicola McDonald, “Eating People and the Alimentary Logic of Richard Coeur de Lion,” in *Pulp Fictions of Medieval England: Essays in Popular Romance*, ed. Nicola McDonald (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 126, who observes, “Like sex and commerce, medieval politics, in particular the politics of national expansion, is fraught with the anthropophagic urge: lords ‘etep’ their underlings and ‘deuouren’ the poor; knights ‘swolwe’ one another and so too kingdoms; enemies are ‘glotons’; and victors ‘feste’ on hard-won land.” For further political readings of anthropophagy, see Heather Blurton, *Cannibalism in High Medieval English Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). For the dynamics of abjection, see Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

89. Other metaphorical approaches to anthropophagy, such as sacrifice, are available: see Alec Irwin, “Devoured by God: Cannibalism, Mysticism, and Ethics in Simone Weil,” *Cross Currents* 51 (2001): 257–72. For cautionary discussion of the titillations and delights of anthropophagy as a favored site of study and thought, see C. Richard King, “The (Mis) uses of Cannibalism in Contemporary Cultural Critique,” *Diacritics* 30 (2000): 106–23 and Rob Latham, “Cannibals and Kitchen Sinks [Review of Priscilla Walton, *Our Cannibals, Ourselves*],” *Contemporary Literature* 47 (2006): 502–4.

90. For abstinence, see the discussion of Prudentius in the next chapter as well as Michael D. Bailey, “Abstinence and Reform at the Council of Basil: Johannes Nider’s *De Abstinencia Esus Carnium*,” *Mediaeval Studies* 59 (1997): 225–60; Bazell, “De esu carniū”; and Eckbert of Schönau, *Sermones contra Catharos*, Sermon 6, “Contra secundum haeresim de esu carniū,” *PL* 195: 36C–39A. For civic butchery legislation, see the end of chapter 5.

most directly injures humans.⁹¹ Such analyses, whether medieval or modern, simply assume anthropophagy to be a special kind of horror, and, in so doing, uncritically perpetuate the distinction and superiority of humans from and to other animals. They fail to investigate how the human differentiates itself from others: how, to put it simply, the human is made, not born.⁹²

Any examination of the purported deliciousness of human flesh in anthropophagy must therefore begin by examining why anthropophagy itself should be considered so remarkable, or, more precisely, what function is performed by considering it remarkable. The question thus ceases to be about the taste of human flesh—though I will return to this issue—and becomes one concerned with the interest in anthropophagy itself. Any examination of the particular cultural fascination with anthropophagy among all the other -phagies should examine what humans lose as humans when they are eaten. The special horror of anthropophagy derives primarily from its violation of codes, not of polity or faith, nor even of species, but of privilege. Anthropophagy confounds the distinction between human and other animal lives, between what can be murdered and what can only be slaughtered, by digesting what the regime of the human demands be interred within a grave. The special horror of anthropophagy is therefore its impossibility: a human who has been slaughtered and eaten, who has lost the exemption from being eaten through which it defines itself as not animal, may have ceased to be recognizable as an *anthropos*.⁹³

The prohibition of anthropophagy serves therefore as a defense not of humans, but of the human itself: hence the severity of both custom and legislation against it. A rare, perhaps unique exception in Christian law occurs in Alfonso the Wise's thirteenth-century law compilation, the *Siete Partidas*, which allows a besieged lord "to eat his own child with impunity [sin male estancia] rather than surrender the castle without permission of the lord";⁹⁴ this law unusually rates duty to one's lord higher than the duty to

91. The well-known systematic development of the implications of Ryder's coinage is Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals* (New York: Random House, 1975).

92. Donovan and Adams, *Feminist Care Tradition*, well illustrates the indebtedness of critical animal theory to feminist thought.

93. My ideas accord with those expressed in the discussion concluding the Animal Studies Group's anthology, *Killing Animals* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 196, in which Erica Fudge suggests that "to eat a human is not just eating flesh and bones," but rather a kind of destruction of the human itself; Steve Baker responds that anthropophagous animals, because they have reversed the structure of subjugation, might no longer properly be called "animal."

94. Quoted in John Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers: The Abandonment of Children in Western Europe from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago

one's species. More typically, the thirteenth-century penitential of the English Bishop Robert Grosseteste classifies anthropophagy among the worst crimes: it explains that "Si pauper pro necessitate carnem asini aut caballi manducaverit, non nocet; si canem iii. di paeniteat; si humanam carnem manducaverit, x an. paeniteat"⁹⁵ (if a poor person eats the flesh of a horse or ass out of necessity, it is not harmful; if a dog, let him do penance for three days; if he has eaten human flesh, let him do ten years of penance). Robert approves the consumption of horses in certain instances, while implying that no one who had other options would eat a horse. He frowns on the consumption of dogs but imposes one of his lightest penances on it: it ranks worse, but only just, than the two-day penances imposed on a married man who shames a married woman by feeling her breasts or on any male who takes a bath with his wife.⁹⁶ Anthropophagy, however, receives one of his heaviest penances: though Robert imagines anthropophages as eaters rather than necessarily as killers, and though they may have eaten human flesh out of desperation, Robert nonetheless imposes penalties exceeded only by those imposed for the worst incest (15 years' penance for any man who has sex with his mother or daughter and 14 years for having sex with his maternal or paternal aunt), the most antisocial acts (15 years for burning down a church or a brother's house), and the most repulsive crimes (15 years for habitual bestiality); anthropophagy is nearly equal to incest with a sister (10 years, 1 on bread and water, and to be forbidden ever to marry). At least in terms of its punishment, anthropophagy is worse than murder.⁹⁷ The anthropophagy

Press, 1988), 329.

95. Joseph Goering and F. A. C. Mantello, eds., "The Early Penitential Writings of Robert Grosseteste," *Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale* 54 (1987): 50 at 102. Grosseteste's class distinctions for hippophagy may be briefly explained as follows: the draft horses of the poor, not manifesting the military and political strength of the horses of the elite, would have been recognized as having roughly the same social function as oxen and thus would have been thought more edible: as Deleuze and Guattari put it, "a racehorse is more different from a workhorse than a workhorse is from an ox" (*Thousand Plateaus*, 257). The editors propose as a source Burchard of Worms's eleventh-century penitential, the *Corrector*, XIX.88–89 (*PL* 140:1002), but these canons do not concern horse, ass, dog, or human flesh, but rather the eating of animals partially eaten by other animals, a point I considered in chapter 2. The reference to anthropophagy in Robert's penitential is very unusual; for the rarity of such references in the penitentials, see Cyrille Vogel and Allen J. Frantzen, *Les Libri paenitentiales, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental*, 27 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1978), 111. Note that there is some evidence for the medieval human consumption of dogs in England: Umberto Albarella, "'The Mystery of Husbandry': Medieval Animals and the Problem of Integrating Historical and Archaeological Evidence," *Antiquity* 73 (1999): 873.

96. Goering and Mantello, "Early Penitential Writings," 59 at 103, and 72 at 104.

97. *Ibid.*, 66 at 103; 128 at 110; 67 at 104; 88 at 106; and 70 at 104. The murder punishment, 22 at 98, requires a complicated series of fasts, almsgiving, and public penance, but its punishment is less severe overall than that levied against the aforementioned crimes; it may

proscription of the thirteenth-century Norwegian *Frostathing* law is still more severe. It forbids the consumption of meat during Lent, demanding that any adult man of sound mind who eats meat give up his property to the bishop and become an outlaw. For those compelled either to eat meat or die, it is merciful, but only up to a point: “If a man is up on a mountain or out among the outer isles in Lent and is delayed by storms, he may eat, rather than perish, whatever is at hand, except,” notably, “only [the flesh of] man.”⁹⁸ In the *Frostathing* law, the Christian code of Lent, as important as it is, matters less than the preservation of individual humans; but no individual human is more important than the human itself. No compulsion, not even starvation, relieves humans of their duty to their status as humans.

Narrative may be thought of as the human’s second line of defense against anthropophagy, as the mere act of telling horror stories about anthropophagy, while not telling stories that evince any special compunction about the consumption of animals, neutralizes anthropophagy’s threat to human particularity. Narratives of anthropophagy decry the violence that humans have suffered; they mourn human death while also memorializing it; and they never consider the death of animals. As Judith Butler points out, communities are as much constituted “by those [they] do grieve for as by those whose deaths [they] disavow.” Butler offers the example of American newspapers that feature obituaries on the deaths of individual American soldiers but that record the deaths of Afghanis or Iraqis, if at all, only en masse.⁹⁹ To use Butler’s terminology, the newspapers “frame” life in a certain way. It is the duty of cultural critics and ethical thinkers to understand “the field of representability” as much by “its explicit contents,” such as the obituaries, as by “what is left out, maintained outside the frame within which representations appear.”¹⁰⁰ Fields of representability divide grievable lives, whose injuries and losses are accorded merit and commemoration, from lives outside the frame, not understood as significantly vulnerable and whose deaths do not

be, however, that Grosseteste meant for the punishment of homicide to provide a pattern for altering the traditional terse language quoted above; see *ibid.*, 69.

98. Larson, *Earliest Norwegian Laws*, 243.

99. Butler, *Precarious Life*, 46; for her insights on obituaries, see 34–37. For an allied point specifically concerned with animals, see Carol Adams, “Caring About Suffering,” in Donovan and Adams, *Feminist Care Tradition*, 210, “To abet [the] instrumental use of animals’ bodies, they are deliberately kept anonymous (don’t name anyone you wish to consume). As opposed to efforts at memorializing slain anonymous humans, we are specifically not to remind people of slain anonymous animals”; Adams restates this position in “The War on Compassion,” *ibid.*, 23, “When humans turn a nonhuman into ‘meat,’ someone who has a very particular, situated life, a unique being, is converted into something that has no individuality, no uniqueness, no specificity.”

100. Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (New York: Verso, 2009), 73.

matter; thus it might be said that the frames divide life from nonlife.¹⁰¹ Chloë Taylor has expanded on Butler's general concentration on human lives by observing that the obituary should also be understood as an act by which animals lives become nonlife, that is, put outside the field of representability and grievability.¹⁰² Anthropophagy narratives are, functionally speaking, a kind of obituary: because they articulate horror they do not articulate for the slaughter of nonhuman life, they fabricate the uniquely significant vulnerability of human lives while obliterating the lives and deaths of animals.

Anthropophagy narratives should be understood, then, as helping to support the general medieval indifference to the suffering and lives of animals in its dominant intellectual and social traditions. Augustine's reading of the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" is foundational. In the first book of *City of God*, Augustine flatly asserts that it protects only humans:

When we say "Thou shalt not kill," we do not understand this of the plants, since they have no sensation, nor of the irrational animals that fly, swim, walk, or creep, since they are dissociated from us by their want of reason, and are therefore by the just appointment of the Creator subjected to us to kill or keep alive for our own uses.¹⁰³

Augustine echoes Stoic and Peripatetic arguments against abstinence from meat-eating by asserting that taking the commandment literally would require that no one tear up shrubbery.¹⁰⁴ He offers this only to mock the

101. For this point, see Butler's further considerations on these issues in *ibid.*, 8. She writes here, at 15, "'this will be a life that will have been lived' is the presupposition of a grievable life, which means that this will be a life that can be regarded as a life, and be sustained by that regard." Note that I am strategically using, rather than accepting, Butler's equation of vulnerability with "life": object-oriented philosophy demands that the category and dignity of "life" be rethought, although this task is outside the scope of this book.

102. Chloë Taylor, "The Precarious Lives of Animals: Butler, Coetzee, and Animal Ethics," *Philosophy Today* 52 (2008): 60–72. Unlike *Precarious Life*, Butler's *Frames of War* considers the question of the animal, especially at 75–77, but raises the question only to suspend it: Butler's focus throughout remains on the human, and on the production of certain human lives as nonliving life. For insights allied to Taylor's, see Fudge, *Pets*, 14, on omissions in John Berger's work: "even as Berger reminds us how significant the concept of home is to our sense of self he, like so many others, remains silent about the presence and role of pets in that home . . . we might regard the silence itself as an object of analysis."

103. Augustine, *City of God*, I.20, 26. For the Latin, Augustine, *Civitate Dei*, vol. 1, 34. For a detailed explanation of the logic of Augustine's exclusion of irrational life from the care owed a neighbor, see Anthony Dupont, "Using or Enjoying Humans: *Uti* and *frui* in Augustine," *Augustiniana* 54 (2004): 486–90 and 493–94. Later commentary, which quotes Augustine, does without the context of Augustine's gloss, which was to utilize the commandment to delegitimize any claims to "honorable" suicide and thus to frustrate a key pagan claim to virtue.

104. The third-century Neoplatonist Porphyry summarizes some of these arguments in *On*

possibility of human abstinence from all killing as a “foolish error” and “ravings.” Thus he rescues the human good conscience. For Augustine, the Sixth Commandment must be almost literally reversed from its express content: thou shalt kill all but humans—but even this is saying too much, since, in his next section, Augustine approves the authority of human governments to go to war and to execute those they deem criminals. The long-standing influence of Augustine’s dual argument for the instrumentality of animals and for understanding this instrumentality as meaning “subject to slaughter” may be observed in Aquinas’s use of Augustine some nine hundred years later in *Summa Theologica* 2a2ae, q. 64, a. 1, “Whether it is unlawful to kill any living thing,” which modifies its Augustinian source only by giving it a slight Scholastic restructuring.¹⁰⁵ Nor was this argument limited to the rarefied world of religious Latinity. It appears in the early fifteenth-century vernacular moral treatise *Dives and Pauper*, which proves at length that the commandment does not apply “bōpyn to man & of beste” (both to men and beasts), but rather, giving Augustine’s formulation the specificity of English law, that “be þis word *occidis* in Latyn he specifyd & schewyd þat he deffendyd sleynge of man & nout of beste, for *occisio* in Latyn is in Englysh manslaute, *quasi hominum cesio*, & þerfor þe proppyr Englych is þis: *Non occides*, þu schal slen no man”¹⁰⁶ (by this word *occisio* in Latin he specified and showed that he forbade slaying of men and not of beasts, for *occisio* in Latin is “manslaughter” in English, *quasi hominum cesio*, and therefore the proper English is this: *Non occides*, you shall slay no man). An allied exegetical tradition, dating to the Apostle Paul, asserts that the verses in Proverbs and the Mosaic law that seem to urge sympathy for animals should either be ignored because of their self-evident absurdity or, because of their absurdity, be interpreted as moral precepts benefiting only humans. Paul cites the Mosaic law against muzzling oxen while they tread corn (Deuteronomy 25:4) and adds incredulously, “Doth

Abstinence from Killing Animals, trans. Gillian Clark (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 32–33.

105. See also Robert Grosseteste, *De Decem Mandatis*, ed. Richard C. Dales and Edward B. King (London: Oxford University Press, 1987), 58–64, which, on the question of animals, simply quotes Augustine at length. I have been unable to consult a reputable version of the *Tractatus decem preceptorum* of Henri of Freimar, a mid-fourteenth-century commentary on the Decalogue extant in more than 350 manuscripts; for discussion of this work, see Bertrand-Georges Guyot, “Quelques aspects de la typologie des commentaires sur le *Credo* et le *Decalogue*,” in *Les Genres littéraires dans les sources théologiques et philosophiques médiévales: définition, critique et exploitation* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Université catholique de Louvain, 1982), 244–47.

106. Priscilla Heath Barnum, *Dives and Pauper*, vol. 2, EETS o. s. 275, 280 (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 33.

God take care for oxen?” (1 Corinthians 9:9). Paul says no, and then converts the law into a maxim for the human community: “Or doth he say this indeed for our sakes? For these things are written for our sakes: that he that plougheth, should plough in hope; and he that thrasheth, in hope to receive fruit” (1 Corinthians 9:10).¹⁰⁷ The anti-Jewish treatise of the Benedictine Abbot Guibert of Nogent (d. 1124) provides an example of a still severer treatment of scripture, as Guibert does not allegorize but rather altogether invalidates a Deuteronomic verse calling for kindness to animals. The verse in question is Deuteronomy 22:6–7:

If thou find as thou walkest by the way, a bird’s nest in a tree, or on the ground, and the dam sitting upon the young or upon the eggs: thou shalt not take her with her young: But shalt let her go, keeping the young which thou hast caught: that it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live a long time.

After quoting the verse, Guibert cites an earlier, Genesiac law, God’s granting of flesh to Noah (Genesis 9:2–4), and then concludes, “Ut modo bene nobis et longam vitam spondeat, si manus nostra pullorum matribus parcat?”¹⁰⁸ (in what way could He promise us long life, if He spared mother hens from our hands?; *PL* 156: 524B). He provides no further interpretation. Regardless of the Mosaic law’s original purpose—perhaps for game management or ritual purity—and despite what it might have meant to exegetes among the Jewish communities Guibert himself encountered,¹⁰⁹ Guibert interprets the verse as concerned only with the needs of animals. Ironically, Guibert’s own bluntly

107. Paul similarly allegorizes the Deuteronomic verse in 1 Timothy 5:17–18, “Let the priests that rule well, be esteemed worthy of double honour: especially they who labour in the word and doctrine: For the scripture saith: Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn: and, The labourer is worthy of his reward.”

108. *Tractatus de incarnatione contra Iudeos* III.8. Guibert directed this work in part against the Count of Soissons, who was sympathetic to Jews and Jewish ideas. For recent treatments of Guibert’s life and works, see Jay Rubenstein, *Guibert of Nogent: Portrait of a Medieval Mind* (New York: Routledge, 2002), who focuses on the *Moralia in Genesim*; and Steven F. Kruger, *The Spectral Jew: Conversion and Embodiment in Medieval Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 39–60, who focuses on Guibert’s attitude toward Jews and other non-Christians. Guibert’s straightforward reading of Genesis 9:2–4 in the *Tractatus* may be contrasted to his wholly symbolic reading of the verse in the *Moralia*, III.9, *PL* 156:105C–106D; note, however, that Guibert does not use this symbolism to advocate for gentler treatment of animals.

109. According to some commentaries, the apparent unimportance of the commandment coupled with its great reward (long life) indicates that God wants all commandments to be followed. Implicit in this interpretation is that animals are normally beneath notice. See Elijah Judah Schochet, *Animal Life in Jewish Tradition: Attitudes and Relationships* (New York: Ktav, 1984), 179–80, which cites the *Avot of Rabbi Natan* (ninth century, Babylon) and, more relevantly for Guibert of Nogent, Rashi (eleventh century, Troyes).

literal interpretation exemplifies the interpretative inflexibility that Christian polemicists, Guibert included, imputed to Judaism. More relevant here, however, is that Guibert follows Augustine and Paul in presenting sympathy for animals as self-evidently mawkish. Previously in the same treatise, Guibert jeered at Jews for avoiding pork;¹¹⁰ at this point he mocks them for abstaining from the flesh of mother birds. Guibert implies that among the many Jewish mistakes is the abdication of human privileges, for in Gerald's world, alimentary resources and even sympathy must be limited to humans lest the human itself lose out.

Perhaps nowhere is human violence against animals rendered at once so necessary and so invisible as in Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*, 2a2ae, q. 25, a. 3, "Whether irrational creatures also ought to be loved out of charity." As Aquinas explains, animals' irrationality bars them from meriting direct charity: they lack the free will that would allow them to choose good, so humans can wish no good for them; for the same reason, humans cannot have authentic fellowship with animals; and, most conclusively, animals' mortality bars them from charity, since humans wish other humans charity "based on the fellowship of everlasting happiness." Nonetheless, animals can merit a kind of indirect charity "if we regard them as the good things that we desire for others, in so far, to wit, as we wish for their preservation, to God's honor and man's use; thus too does God love them out of charity." Aquinas permits charitable feeling for animals only insofar as they are useful to God and humans; he also seems to delimit what God himself should do or feel. Since God created animals to be used by humans, and since slaughter and consumption are among these uses, this lethal charity, unrecognizable as violence,¹¹¹ does not prevent but rather demands that animals be put to work, skinned, or eaten.¹¹² In such a system, only human injuries matter to

110. *Tractatus* III.8, PL 156: 523D–524A.

111. See Derrida, *Beast and the Sovereign*, 109, "once there is cruelty only toward the fellow, well, not only can one cause hurt without doing evil . . . and without being cruel not only toward humans not recognized as true humans and true brothers . . . but also toward any living being foreign to the human race . . . one would have the right to inflict the worst suffering on 'animals' without ever being suspected of the least cruelty."

112. I echo Dorothy Yamamoto's summation of Aquinas, "there is no sin in killing animals. In fact, to refuse to eat meat is to spurn the careful provisions which God has made to sustain life on earth," "Aquinas and Animals: Patrolling the Boundary?" in Linzey and Yamamoto, *Animals on the Agenda*, 80. For more detailed appraisals of Aquinas's understanding of animals, see Judith Barad, "A Tension in Aquinas' Accounts between the Ontological and Ethical Status of Animals," in *Greek and Medieval Studies in Honor of Leo Sweeney*, ed. William J. Carroll and John J. Furlong (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 127–43, who observes that Aquinas understands animal existence to be a higher form than that of plants, and Peter Drum, "Aquinas and the Moral Status of Animals," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 66 (1992): 483–88, who argues that inferiority of animals to humans does not

the dominant representational systems: humans are buried and prayed for, their deaths memorialized, the violence they suffer reckoned an object of horror or caution. Animals are only slaughtered, sometimes after suffering harassment by dogs to tenderize their meat, and their remains dumped into rivers rather than buried. This offal, the remnant of animal nonlife, is present to humans, if at all, only as a noxious reminder of what humans would rather forget.¹¹³

With animals so entirely given over to human use, it would be, to recall Augustine, a “foolish error” to mourn or commemorate their deaths, to pray for the horse, as *Bevis* asks us to do for Arondel, or to take the *Carmina Burana*’s mocking “Lament of the Roast Swan” as a serious record of violence, or to similarly credit Anglo-Saxon Exeter Riddle 77, which gives voice to a helpless oyster eaten raw by a human.¹¹⁴ To take these works seriously as poems about animals would be to memorialize nonlife; it would force a recognition of the importance of the “denegation of murder...to the violent institution of the ‘who’ [rather than an animal ‘that’] as subject.”¹¹⁵ A popular medieval story tells what happens when a human grieves for what it should not. In the story, a greyhound overturns a cradle and bloodies itself trying to defend its master’s infant son from a serpent. Informed that his son has died, depending on the version of the story, either from his wife or

justify cruelty. Barad and Drum both try to establish a Thomist foundation for animal rights, although Barad recognizes that Aquinas himself would disagree. For that matter, so would the modern Church; Fiddes, *Meat*, 64, observes, “Pope Pius IX refused to permit the establishment of a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals in Rome, on the grounds that this would imply that human beings have duties towards animals.”

113. The introduction to Albrecht Classen, ed., *Violence in Medieval Courtly Literature: A Casebook* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 15, is exemplary: “our focus will rest on the manifestation of mostly physical violence as understood by the modern (and medieval) sense of the word, that is, as violence that leads to the harm or even death of another person, to the destruction of an object, an institution, or a political entity.” Classen neither justifies his exclusion of living nonpersons from this list (unless “objects” includes animals) nor defines what counts as a person.

114. For these two poems, see “Olim lacus colueram,” well-known from its partial setting by Carl Orff, in Alfons Hilka and Otto Schumann, ed., *Carmina Burana*, vol. 1 (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1930), 215, and “Sae mec fedde,” in W. S. Mackie, ed. and trans., *The Exeter Book, Part 2: Poems 9–32*, EETS o. s. 194 (London: Oxford University Press, 1934). Mercedes Salvador, “The Oyster and the Crab: A Riddle Duo (Nos. 77 and 78) in the ‘Exeter Book,’” *Modern Philology* 101 (2004): 401–6, notes the violence of the verb in the oyster’s complaint that men “min flæsc fretan” (my flesh devour), but reads it as signaling disapproval for monastic gluttony rather than as a demand for compassion for the oyster itself. Also see “Flevit lepus parvulus” (The Little Hare Wept), in which a hare laments being hunted by dogs, edited by Giuseppe Scalia, “Il *Testamentum Asini* e il *Lamento della lepre*,” *Studi Medievali* Series III 3 (1963): 143–44.

115. Derrida, “Eating Well,” 283.

nursemaid, the master rushes home, sees the nursery a shambles and his dog covered with blood, and kills the dog. The tale commonly sneers at women's bad counsel (rather than, say, the master's impetuosity), affirming its misogyny through the narrative itself when the grieving master abandons the company of women. But in so doing, he abandons not just women, but human society as a whole. In one Middle English version, the master "brake his sper in thre partiis, & put his wyf in preson, and yede him self to the holy londe"¹¹⁶ (broke his spear in three parts, and put his wife in prison, and took himself to the Holy Land); in another, he enters his orchard, goes to his pond, "and for dule of hys hounde / he lepe in and sanke to gronde"¹¹⁷ (and out of grief for his hound, he leaped in and sank to the ground; 884–85), drowning himself; in another, he strips off all his armor:

And al barfote forth gan he ga,
 Withowten leue of wife or childe.
 He went into þe woddes wild,
 And to þe forest fra al men,
 þat nane sold of his sorow ken. (918–22)¹¹⁸

And entirely barefoot he left, without saying goodbye to his wife or child.
 He went into the wild woods, into the forest, far from all men, so that no
 one should know of his sorrow.

The knight breaks his spear, forsakes his wife, and leaves for the Holy Land, not on crusade, but seeking penance heavy enough to cleanse his offense; he drowns himself; he disappears into the woods, where no one can witness his sorrow. Once astonished by his recognition of shared vulnerability with what the human community recognizes only as a dog, the knight surrenders his entire social existence.¹¹⁹ For the knight to remain himself and for the human community to persist, he must frame others appropriately: animals must die like animals, unmourned, discarded, and unthought.

116. Sidney J. H. Herrtage, ed., *The Early English Versions of the Gesta Romanorum*, EETS e. s. 33 (London: N. Trübner & Co., 1879), 99.

117. Thomas Wright, ed., *The Seven Sages in English Verse* (London: T. Richards, 1845).

118. Killis Campbell, ed., *The Seven Sages of Rome* (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1907). For an extensive list of sources and analogues of the story, see lxxix–lxxxii.

119. See also Jean-Claude Schmitt, *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, Healer of Children Since the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Martin Thom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), which discusses a cult based on the same story, shut down by the thirteenth-century Dominican Stephen of Bourbon. I hope to treat this episode in detail in a future study.

The purported taste of human flesh and the pleasure it gave to its eaters serves as the human's final defense against anthropophagy's threat to human superiority. Anthropophagy narratives present human flesh as a delicacy for much the same reason that the Eucharist had to be understood as sweet.¹²⁰ The Host is literally just bread, but to preserve the faith, it must be experienced as the body of God, as surpassing in savor any worldly food; likewise human flesh is just meat, but to distinguish it from the flesh of animals and thus to preserve the human, it must be experienced—or others must be thought to have experienced it—as the sweetest and most delicious of flesh. Although the eaten human seems to have lost the structural position of being human, the fixation of the anthropophage on human flesh attests to a persistent human supremacy. The violence suffered by humans being eaten resembles that suffered by martyrs in hagiography, where every torment inflicted on them by some insatiable compulsive tyrant bears witness not to the tyrant's strength but to the capacity of Christianity to drive a tyrant to frenzy. It is therefore to the advantage of humans that the taste of their flesh encourages anthropophagy.

Humans may be perfectly aware that their flesh resembles the flesh of other creatures; that it can be wounded or putrefy as readily as animal flesh; that it probably tastes much like pork, beef, or cheese. But to sustain themselves as human, various fictions of anthropophagy—historiographic, ethnographic, cynegetic—invent anthropophages that believe, to an obsessive degree, in the superiority of human flesh. This false but intense belief sustains the human sense of superiority interpassively, to use Slavoj Žižek's locution, as humans preserve their human particularity by "believing or enjoying through the other."¹²¹ In "Je sais bien, mais quand meme . . .," Octave Mannoni reappraised Freud's work on disavowal and fetishism to argue that the subject does not need to believe in the fetish directly; the subject can sustain the potency of its fetish by believing that others truly believe in that which it knows to be false. Belief in the fetish therefore need not be

120. For the purported sweetness of the Eucharist, see Elizabeth Saxon, *The Eucharist in Romanesque France: Iconography and Theology* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 150–51, which cites Augustine's commentary on Psalm 33:9, "O taste, and see that the Lord is sweet," a verse sung during the distribution of the Eucharist. For the popularity of this verse, and conceptions of God as sweet, from the twelfth century (at least) through the end of the Middle Ages, see Rachel Fulton, "'Taste and see that the Lord is Sweet' (Ps. 33:9): The Flavor of God in the Monastic West," *The Journal of Religion* 86 (2006): 176–80. The thirteenth-century Italian mystic Angela of Foligno also speaks of the great savor of the Eucharist over the common run of meat: see Angela of Foligno, *Complete Works*, trans. Paul Lachance (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 186.

121. For example, Slavoj Žižek, "The Supposed Subjects of Ideology," *Critical Quarterly* 39 (1997): 48.

direct; it can be believed indirectly through others the fetishist imagines lack his or her sophistication. Developing this point, Žižek has written about the “subject supposed to believe,”¹²² someone—or indeed, something—external supposed to believe sincerely in that which we only pretend to believe, or in which we know ourselves not to believe in sufficiently, as if authentic belief were somewhere “out there.” The human subject preserves its sense of itself, whatever its doubts, by believing that the anthropophage stupidly, directly “believes” in the human subject’s importance. Held aloft passively by desiring others, whether these are animal, monstrous humans, or indeed God himself, who sacrifices Himself in His pure and direct love for the sake of human subjects who know themselves not to be worth the trouble, the human subject comports itself as if it were desirable, as if it especially mattered.

Although *Dives and Pauper* argues that the verb “occidit” of the Sixth Commandment applies only to humans, it still limits the slaughter of animals only to those occasions “when it is profytable to hym for mete or for clopinge or for to avoydyn noyance of þe bestis which ben noyous to man” (when it is profitable to them [i.e., mankind] for food or for clothing or to avoid injury from the beasts which are injurious to men) and forbids anyone “to slen hem for cruelte [or] for lykyng in vanite & schrewydnese” (to slay [animals] out of cruelty or for the gratification of idle desires and depravity). Humans, it explains, “schuldyn han rewþe on beste & bryd & nout harmyn hem withoutyn cause & taken reward þat þei ben Godis creaturis”¹²³ (should have mercy on beasts and birds and not harm them without cause and pay attention to their being God’s creatures). The only causes for killing animals that *Dives and Pauper* recognizes as proper are those that work past or use up the animal’s life on the way to satisfying some human need—food, clothing, self-defense. The animal’s life should entirely disappear into the product. Yet depraved killers of animals do not kill “withoutyn cause,” for they too kill to satisfy human needs. They sin not by being indifferent but rather by paying too much attention to animal suffering; they sin by treating nonlife as life. Proper killers work to reduce animals to utter materiality, while depraved killers work on the animal’s very life—its presence, its prolongation, its end. Depraved killers thus acknowledge that the life of animals has value in itself, that animals possess something in excess of what could be used up in the creation of some product. The obverse of this sin would be

122. Slavoj Žižek, *Plague of Fantasies*, 106–17. Boaz Hagin, “Examples in Theory: Interpassive Illustrations and Celluloid Fetishism,” *Cinema Journal* 48 (2008): 7–13, provides a clear account of Žižek’s account of interpassivity and of Mannoni’s distinctions from Freud.

123. Barnum, *Dives and Pauper*, 35–36.

to slaughter humans without depravity, without some kind of inassimilable excess, whether of grief or mourning or sadistic delight. For this would be a failure to acknowledge that humans, to be human, must possess something more than what can be calculated within regimes of “profyt.” Slaughtering humans must not be simply a job, but a sin, a horror, a drive, or a pleasure that is imagined to infect eaters with “the hunger.”

CHAPTER 4



DOMESTICATING BEASTS

Cynocephali, The Wild Herdsman, and Prudentius's Indomitable Sheep

I.

Cynocephali: How a Dog Becomes Human

A ninth-century Carolingian ivory plaque, perhaps produced in Corbie, depicts in bas-relief Adam and Eve, several monsters, and various animals.¹ The plaque is divided into seven vertically arranged groups: Adam and Eve appear at the top; immediately below them are anthropocephalic monsters with animal bodies: satyrs, centaurs, and harpies; next, zoocephalic monsters with human bodies; and finally, below them, four sets of animals. A foundational text in medieval teratology, Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies* XI.iii.3, warrants an interpretation rather than just a description of the plaque's monsters, for Isidore explains that the word "mon-

1. Entourage of Charles the Bald, *Plaque known as The Earthly Paradise*, Ivory, H. 34 cm; W. 11 cm; D. 0.9 cm, circa 870–75, OA 9064, Musée du Louvre. I was first directed to the plaque by Venetia Newall, "The Dog-Headed Saint Christopher," in *Folklore on Two Continents: Essays in Honor of Linda Dégh*, ed. Linda Dégh et al. (Bloomington, IN: Trickster Press, 1980), 245, which cites several medieval images of cynocephali, including this one and a carving of cynocephali over the town gates of Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne, at Corrèze, France, where they represent the souls of the damned. For the hypothesis of production of the Earthly Paradise plaque in Corbie, see Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, "Les trésors de Neustrie du VIIe au IXe siècle d'après les sources écrites: orfèvrerie et sculpture sur ivoire," in *La Neustrie: les pays au nord de la Loire de 650 à 850*, ed. Hartmut Atsma, vol. 2 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1989), 279–84.

strum” derives from “monitus” (admonition), “demonstrare” (indicate), or “monstrare” (show).² An Isidoran symbolic reading of the monsters might begin by observing that the human head is reason’s capital, and the bipedal human body a materialized form of reason: Adam and Eve might then be understood as modeling the perfect harmony of reason with the body; the anthropocephalic creatures nearest Adam and Eve, reason’s ascendancy over unruly animal desires; and the zoocephalic monsters, the upright, rational, bipedal form of the human governed by animal lusts and thus made morally monstrous, as in Gregory the Great’s *Moralia*, where he comments, “carnali affectioni succumbunt, non jam homines, sed jumenta nominantur” (they who succumb to carnal moods are not men but are called beasts of burden; *PL* 76: 294C).³ In medieval as in modern studies, monsters of course can do much more than teach such traditional lessons. In the twelfth century, Bernard of Clairvaux famously found cloistered depictions of monsters, so “mira diversarum formarum . . . ubique varietas” (plentiful and astonishing a variety of contradictory forms), to be intolerable rather than instructive because, among other reasons, they inspired the terrible vice of curiosity. Mesmerized, a monk would rather “totumque diem occupare singula ista mirando, quam in lege Dei meditando” (spend the whole day wondering at every single one of them than in meditating on the law of God).⁴ The curious monk’s fascination suggests a kind of postsymbolic symbology, whereby the monsters of the carving embody the resistance to and indeed the freedom from both classification and the Law, secular and otherwise. When humans allow themselves to be captivated by monsters, the polar categories of human and animal may, as Jeffrey Jerome Cohen writes, “yield to the pull of dreamier horizons and unforeclosed possibilities.”⁵ Humans lost in wonder may fantasize about another way of

2. Isidore, *Etymologies*, 244.

3. For further discussion of clerical interpretations of monsters, see Jacques Voisenet, *Bêtes et hommes dans le monde médiéval: le bestiaire des clers du Ve au XIIe siècle* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 23–24, which cites Gregory of Nyssa’s letter on perfection, and Gregory the Great, *Moralia*, VII.28.36.

4. Edition and translation of Bernard’s *Apologia ad Guillelmum Abbatem*, in Conrad Rudolph, *The “Things of Greater Importance”: Bernard of Clairvaux’s Apologia and The Medieval Attitude toward Art* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 283. For Rudolph’s commentary on Bernard’s passage on monstrous hybrids, see 119–24 and 336–37, where Rudolph explains his translation of “diversarum” as “contradictory.” Rudolph counters longstanding arguments that Bernard’s *Apologia* dismisses art in general, that it is directed specifically at Cluniacs, and, especially, that Bernard’s writing on art expresses a personal idiosyncrasy.

5. Cohen, “Inventing with Animals in the Middle Ages,” in Hanawalt and Kiser, *Engaging with Nature*, 55.

being, one unconcerned with identity and a struggle to remain perched at the apex of creation.

Joining with Isidore, Cohen has termed “the monstrous body . . . pure culture. A construct and a projection, the monster exists only to be read [and] signifies something other than itself.”⁶ As signifying subjects, monsters serve as moral lessons on the proper role of reason; as models of new ways of being; and, per other teratological interpretations, as tools for Christians to generate, imagine, and contain the threat of religious and ethnic difference, or as symptoms of a disordered world.⁷ But monsters need not be only signifying subjects. If they are thought to exist, as they were often thought to exist, they possess beings, like those of any other, inaccessible to signification, beings that do not mean but are. So long as the category of the human persists, with all that this implies about the unique worldly supremacy of humans and the uniquely human immunity to death, the actual being of monsters renders them liable not just to interpretation, but to judgment, which will either admit or deny them entrance to political and indeed eternal life.

Recall Gerald of Wales’s shifting reactions to animal-human hybrids and bestiality in a block of stories in his *History and Topography of Ireland*. To the story of a “semibos vir,” a creature partly ox and partly human, sheltered by the Marcher lord Maurice fitzGerald and killed by Irish natives, Gerald responds with what Cohen terms an “uncharacteristic undercurrent of melancholy, ambivalence, and regret.”⁸ Gerald does not judge the nature of this, the section’s first hybrid: he lists its bovine face and extremities and its speechlessness; he condemns its death; but he is reluctant to categorize it (“an extraordinary man was seen—if indeed it be right to call him a man”). Notably, in the *History*’s second recension, as if responding to critics, Gerald extends his consideration of the ox/man: he admits the peculiarity of classifying the death of the “semibos vir” as a homicide, points to its upright posture as justification for considering it a human (here quoting the Ovidian tag I discuss in my first chapter), and finally suggests that the strange excursus might be excused as simply representing nature having its revenge

6. Cohen, “Monster Culture (Seven Theses),” 4.

7. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 132–33; Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, & Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 42; Voisenet, *Bêtes et hommes*, 18–19, 22.

8. Cohen, *Difficult Middles*, 88. For this section, see Gerald of Wales, “Geraldus Cambrensis in *Topographia Hibernie*”: 145–47 (first recension); Gerald of Wales, *Topographia hibernica*, 108–11 (second recension); Gerald of Wales, *History and Topography of Ireland*, 73–76 (English translation of first recension, used above, with some small modifications).

rather than as offering a topic for disputation.⁹ Gerald thus, very briefly, suspends debate over the nature and privileges of the human; he would rather the ox/man be thought about some other way. He cannot relax his judgment for long. The next hybrid he considers, yet another ox/man, he classifies as having “plus hominis quam pecoris” (more of the man than of livestock); he then describes a cow/stag as being more like livestock than like wild animals. In both these cases, he gathers them closer to himself: one is nearly human, one nearly domestic. He concludes with two cases of bestiality, both committed by women, one with a goat, the other with a lion. Though bestiality produced the hybrids of his previous stories, though Gerald praises the goat, perhaps aesthetically, perhaps erotically, as being “remarkable . . . for the length of its coat and height of its horns,” humans drawn by this beauty to “yield to the pull of dreamier horizons and unforeclosed possibilities” must, Gerald reports, be consigned to death, because a rational being must not submit itself “to such shameful commerce with a brute animal.” Despite this judgment, Gerald does not quite know what to do with the final incident: he first blames the lion for habitually “bestiali amore amplecti” (embracing in bestial love) a “fatuum” (foolish woman), then blames the woman for “muliebribus ipsum demulcens illecebris” (caressing it with womanly enticements), and then exclaims, “O utramque bestiam turpi morte dignissimam” (Each one a beast, most worthy of a shameful death!). Having allocated responsibility to both human and animal, he then recalls that even the ancients committed bestiality. He quotes Leviticus 20:16, “The woman that shall lie under any beast, shall be killed together with the same,” and glosses the verse to explain that the beast is killed “non propter culpam, a qua bestialitas excusat” (not because of its guilt, from which it is excused because of its bestialness). Hiding himself within doctrinal Christianity, Gerald makes the lion only an object of the woman’s lust and subjects the lion to death but not to execution: in short, Gerald tries to reactivate the temporarily inert system of the human. But his attempt goes awry: when he justifies the condemnation of the lion to death “propter memoriae refricationem, quae ad mentem facinus revocare solet” (to irritate the memory again, by recalling to the mind the crime), he may be describing not so much a deterrent (directed

9. Gerald of Wales, *Topographia hibernica*, 109: “Sed excursus huiusmodi sunt excusandi: potiusque timenda est naturae vindicta, quam disputatione discutienda.” In this section, the two recensions are identical in structure and, in almost all cases, in language, apart from this new conclusion and Gerald’s six-line extension to the antinovely lyric, “Omnia jam,” concluding the goat passage: in the second recension, its last lines are “criminis infandi, prodigiosa creans” (creating freaks of unspeakable crime). For the translation, and a discussion of the poem within the context of Gerald’s other Neoplatonic poetry, see Thomas C. Moser, *A Cosmos of Desire: The Medieval Latin Erotic Lyric in English Manuscripts* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 188–89.

at whom or what, one wonders) as his own collection and display of stories. His own mind irritated, in the second recension he could not help but add another story, a brief reference to Pasiphaë, the Minotaur's mother, who slept with a bull.

At least two countervailing urges drive Gerald's bestiality recollections: to keep irritating his mind with such stories to see where they might take him, and to preserve the particularity of human dignity. The stories, like the arrangement of the Carolingian carving, suggest for a time the existence and continued production of medial categories, but Gerald tries his best to let nothing linger in the middle. He betrays the deracinating potential of monsters by trying to confine them (and himself, it should be said) to categories of either human or animal. Who knows where he might have ended up had he not felt compelled to judge? So long as the exclusive categories of either human or animal are thought to exist, the logic of both salvation and worldly justice will demand a resolution of the middle, monstrous state into being either human or animal. Per the schema of Psalm 8:7–8, monsters will be placed on the side of humans with God, or on the side of the dominated, with “all sheep and oxen: moreover the beasts also of the fields. The birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea, that pass through the paths of the sea.”¹⁰

Gerald provides no sure determination for how to judge a monster as human or animal. If he relies on anything, it is the arbitrary interpassive state in which one death is judged an execution (as with the woman) and the other merely an extrajudicial elimination (as with the lion). His resolution suggests, once again, that modes of violence provide the surest determination of the distinction between human and animal. This is as true for other teratological works, two of which I concentrate on below: first, a set of works concerned with the cynocephali, creatures with human bodies and canine heads, and then the Wild Herdsman of Chrétien de Troyes' *Yvain*. While

10. Note that the commentary tradition on these verses by and large allegorizes them; see, for example, Augustine, *Expositions of the Psalms* (1–32), ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Maria Boulding, vol. 3 (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2000), 137, which includes what would become the standard reading of the swimming fish as the *curiosos*, the excessively curious and worldly (e.g., Remigius of Auxerre, *Enarrationem in Psalmos*, PL 131: 186C). Aquinas's Psalm commentary is an exception; he writes, “And man, with respect to his soul, is not subject to any natural corporeal creature, whether in the beginning or in continuance, because he is not produced by a creature, and he acts freely: he does not perish with the body; and in this the honor of man consists. . . . Consequently, when he says, ‘Thou hast made,’ he writes of the mercy of God to man by comparison to the things which are below man, because He wanted man to have dominion over all those things below him: and regarding this he does three things. First, he sets forth the dominion. Second, the faculty of dominating. Third, the number of things subordinated. Second, therefore, ‘Thou hast subjugated all things.’ Third, therefore, ‘sheep and oxen’” (“Psalm 8 and Commentary,” trans. Gregory Sadler, The Aquinas Translation Project, http://www4.desales.edu/~philtheo/loughlin/ATP/Psalms_8.html).

the proof by domination is entirely in keeping with my previous arguments, monsters pose such forceful challenges to the human claim to unique possession of reason that the proofs establish the structure of the human with much more than usual force and clarity. At the same time, even though they rely on animal domestication to prove their monsters human, the teratological works also hesitate over the untrammelled exercise of human dominion over animals. In this chapter, I argue that this hesitance about violence against animals emerges precisely because the proof itself lays bare the process, and hence the contingency, of the human.

I concentrate on the cynocephali because of their popularity in teratologic catalogs and because they are remarkably ambiguous monsters, being partly human and partly animal in form.¹¹ Giants and pygmies, however bloodthirsty their appetites or strange their customs, are still wholly anthropomorphic; the sciapod, which hops about on one enormous foot and, in the noonday sun, uses it as a parasol, otherwise has a human shape; the same can be said for the headless blemmyae, whose faces are in their chests; still other anthropomorphic “monsters” are notable only for their odd appetites, such as those that subsist only on milk, apples, or delectable odors. Nor is the cynocephalus just a hypertrophic animal, like the dragon or monstrous boar or wolf fought by so many chivalric heroes. The cynocephalus has the human’s bipedal and erect body, conducive to nonappetitive, celestial thought, and thus the material form of reason; yet its body terminates in an animal head, suggesting governance by bestial instincts and filthy desires.¹² Furthermore, even when considered among other zoomorphs—the crane-headed archers of *Herzog Ernst*, for example—the cynocephalus is especially resistant to classification, because of its canine attributes. The dog is “the animal pivot of the human universe,” as David Gordon White remarks, “lurking at the threshold between wildness and domestication and all of the valences that these two ideal poles of experience hold,” or, as Laura Hobgood-Oster puts

11. For surveys of the cynocephali from classical antiquity through the Middle Ages, see Claude Lecouteux, “Les Cynocéphales: Étude d’une tradition tératologique de l’Antiquité au XIIe siècle,” *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 24 (1981): 117–29, and, in summary form, Claude Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la littérature allemande du Moyen Âge: contribution à l’étude du merveilleux médiéval* (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1982), Vol. II, 20–28; Claude Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 31–46; Friedman, *Monstrous Races*, e.g., 70–75; Joyce Tally Lionarons, “From Monster to Martyr: The Old English Legend of Saint Christopher,” in Timothy S. Jones and David A. Sprunger, eds., *Marvels, Monsters, and Miracles: Studies in the Medieval and Early Modern Imaginations* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2002), 167–74; David Gordon White, *Myths of the Dog-Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 47–70.

12. Voisenet, *Bêtes et hommes*, 20–21, interprets the cynocephalic body in much the same way, but reads their disordered bodies as decisively barring the cynocephali from humanity.

it, “the ultimate example of the excluded other who is and always has been present.”¹³ The wolf’s carnivorousness presents, as Aleksander Pluskowski termed it, a “cosmological dilemma” to humans by challenging their dominance over the natural world.¹⁴ So too with the dog. The dog is the animal most intimately associated with humans, its trusted companion in violence and within private domestic spaces; at the same time it closely resembles a wolf: recall the French idiom for twilight, “entre chien et loup,” when each becomes uncanny.

Augustine’s influential answer to the question of the humanity of monsters, which I discussed in my first chapter, is perhaps the most generous one of the Middle Ages.¹⁵ In *City of God* XVI.8, Augustine responds to the question of whether monstrous races descended from Adam, since, if they did, then they are as human as any of Adam’s nonmonstrous descendants. Augustine first lists several monsters from the Plinian tradition: cyclops, hermaphrodites, pygmies, sciapods, blemmyae, and then finally the cynocephali, about which he professes himself a bit stymied: “What shall I say [Quid dicam] of the cynocephali, whose dog-like head and barking proclaim them beasts rather than men?” Wisely, Augustine suggests incredulity as the proper response: “we are not bound to believe all we hear of these monstrosities.” It might be expected that Augustine, like Aristotle’s contemporary the rationalist demythologizer Palaephatus, would then insist on the impossibility of monsters’ existence or else offer naturalistic explanations for them: cynocephali are really apes, while pygmies are not as short as legend would have it.¹⁶ Instead, having concluded his list of monsters with a single zoomorph, he offers a heuristic for distinguishing between human and nonhuman life, namely that *any* creature descended from Adam is also a “rational and mortal” and thus is human, “no matter what unusual appearance he

13. White, *Dog-Man*, 15; Hobgood-Oster, *Holy Dogs and Asses*, 84.

14. Pluskowski, *Wolves and Wilderness*, 15. For discussion of the biological and cultural resemblances—and enmities—between wolf and dog, see, in the same book, 85–89.

15. Here I accord with Valerie Flint, “Monsters and the Antipodes in the Early Middle Ages and Enlightenment,” *Viator* 15 (1984): 73, where she characterizes Augustine’s arguments as urging “humans beings [to] an extension of their tolerance and sympathy.”

16. Palaephatus, *On Unbelievable Tales (Peri apiston)*, 30, for example, “What is said about the Centaurs is that they were beasts with the overall shape of a horse—except for the head, which was human. But even if there are some people who believe that such a horse once existed, it is impossible. Horse and human natures are not compatible, nor are their foods the same: what a horse eats could not pass through the mouth and throat of a man. And if there ever was such a shape, it would also exist today.” The section on monsters in Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologies* (XI.iii.28, 245) suggests, for example, that Geryon, the legendary king with three bodies, was actually three brothers in such agreement that they were thought of as having one soul. Albert the Great suggested that the cynocephali were probably great apes; see Friedman, *Monstrous Races*, 24–25.

presents in color, movement, sound,” including, presumably, barking, “nor how peculiar he is in some power.” Then, after considering individual cases of monstrous births, and after observing that apes, monkeys, and sphinxes might be thought human if they were not already known to be beasts, Augustine concludes XVI.8 by summing up the three options: “Wherefore, to conclude this question cautiously and guardedly, either these things which have been told of some races have no existence at all; or if they do exist, they are not human races; or if they are human, they are descended from Adam.” If Cyncephali exist, they must be determined to be either human or animal, but nothing in Augustine’s heuristic excludes the cynocephali from being human (for that matter, nor does it prevent the denial of humanity to anthropomorphic creatures far less ambiguous than cynocephali).¹⁷ In allowing cynocephali the possibility of being rational, Augustine at least implicitly participates in a teratologic strain that stresses the civilized quality of these monsters. This widespread tradition begins with Ctesias of Cnidus (5th–4th century B. C. E.), whose work was transmitted into the Middle Ages by the *Bibliotheca* of the ninth-century Byzantine patriarch Photios: in Ctesias, although the cynocephali eat raw flesh and can communicate with their clearly human neighbors only by baying or gesture, they wear clothing (linen for the rich, leaves for the poor), hunt with weapons, and domesticate animals.¹⁸ Some Christian thinkers imagined that cynocephali might be, like humans in general, the beneficiaries of salvation. The sculptures of the center tympanum in the narthex of the Church of the Madeleine at Vézelay, France (begun 1124) concretize the injunction of Acts 2:39 that demands that the apostles preach even to “all that are far off” by including monstrous races, including cynocephali, within the ambit of the evangelistic mission.¹⁹ One cynocephalus, born “Reprobis” and renamed “Christopher” upon his

17. For the Latin, *Civitate Dei*, vol. 2, 137. In interpreting *City of God* XVI.8 as leaving open the possibility of cynocephalic humanity, I differ from Scott A. Bruce, “Hagiography as Monstrous Ethnography: A Note on Ratramnus of Corbie’s Conversion of the Cynocephali,” in *Insignis sophiae arcator: Medieval Latin Studies in Honour of Michael W. Herren on his 65th Birthday*, ed. Gernot R. Wieland, Michael W. Herren, and Carin Ruff (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 49 and 54, who argues that Augustine denies the humanity of cynocephali because they lack language, and Paul Edward Dutton, *Charlemagne’s Mustache: And Other Cultural Clusters of a Dark Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 46, who similarly argues that Augustine “deemed the Cynocephalus more animal than human.”

18. For this background, see Lecouteux, “Les Cynocéphales”: 118, and, at greater length (and for a translation of Photios’s letter from Greek to French), Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la littérature allemande*, 21.

19. For a discussion of the cynocephali in a Pentecostal context, see Friedman, *Monstrous Races*, 61, 64–66, and 68.

conversion to Christianity, was even venerated as a saint.²⁰ Such images and stories materialize a double lesson: God's dominion extends to the furthest reaches of the world, and, if God can reach monstrous people, then nearer humans whose ensouled status or aptness for missionary efforts may have been in doubt become far more assuredly human.²¹

A contrasting medieval tradition emphasizes the monstrosity of the cynocephali, at least implicitly excluding them from the community of the human. In his *Etymologies*, Isidore initially follows—but later, silently, disowns—the Augustinian model by asserting that “just as, in individual nations, there are instances of monstrous people, so in the whole of human-kind [in universo genere humano; *PL* 82: 421A], there are certain monstrous races,”²² which, in his short list, includes giants, cyclops, and cynocephali. After a brief discussion of giants, Isidore then quotes Augustine's initial assessment that cynocephalic barking “reveals that they are rather beasts than humans.”²³ What Augustine introduces with a statement of wonder—“quid dicam?” (what should I say?)—Isidore states as a bald fact. The order of discussion is also significant: where Augustine moves from a portrayal of the cynocephali as less than human to describing a heuristic that would allow them to be human if they were descended from Adam, Isidore, by rearranging Augustine, first includes the cynocephali among humanity, but then judges them to be beasts. Notably, Isidore classifies no other monster as more beast than human: not the blemmyae; not the panotians, whose ears cover their bodies; not even the other zoomorphs, such as the artabatians, who “are said to walk on all fours, like cattle”; or the hippopodes, who “have a human form and horses' hooves.” Despite their odd forms, even despite their inability to walk upright, Isidore never doubts that these mon-

20. For background on Christopher, see David Williams, *Deformed Discourse: The Function of the Monster in Mediaeval Thought and Literature* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 286–97, which considers Christopher's antecedents in Hermes, Anubis, and Herakles; also see Friedman, *Monstrous Races*, 72–75; Newall, “Dog-Headed Saint,” 242–49; Andy Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf-Manuscript* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 12–18; White, *Dog-Man*, chapter 2, “The Cynocephalic Saint.” Eastern Orthodox iconography sometimes depicts the saint with a horse's head, while the iconography of the Roman church tends to imagine Christopher as merely a giant rather than as a dog-headed man. The saint first appears in the fourth-century Egyptian Acts of Bartholomew and spreads into France and Spain by the sixth century and Germany, England, and Ireland by the eighth.

21. Strickland, *Making Monsters*, 50–51, also makes this point.

22. Isidore, *Etymologies*, XI.iii.12, 244; cf. Augustine, *City of God*, XVI.8, 532, “Accordingly, it ought not to seem absurd to us, that as in individual races there are monstrous births, so in the whole race [as in Isidore, “in universo genere humano”; Dombert, *Civitate Dei*, vol. 2, 137] there are monstrous races.”

23. Isidore, *Etymologies*, 245.

sters are human. Significantly, when Isidore begins to offer demythologizing explanations for wonders—the barking of Scylla, for example, is simply the noise of violent waves and a loud whirlpool (in which case *both* Scylla and Charybdis create whirlpools!)—he characterizes the dog-headed Cerberus as having much in common with “irrational living creatures,”²⁴ implicitly underscoring his judgment of the cynocephali as more animal than human. Several other teratologic works follow Isidore in emphasizing cynocephalic animality or at least savagery. Rabanus Maurus’s *De universo* simply quotes Isidore (*PL* 111: 195C–198A); Paul the Deacon’s eighth-century *History of the Lombards* tells a story in which the Langobards trick their enemies by convincing them that their army includes cynocephali who “drink human blood and quaff their own gore if they cannot reach their foe”;²⁵ the seventh- or eighth-century *Cosmographia* characterizes the cynocephali as a “gens scelerata”²⁶ (accursed people); and the mid-seventh- or mid-eighth-century *Liber monstrorum* characterizes cynocephali as imitators “not of humans but the beasts themselves in eating raw flesh,” whose speech is “contaminated” or “perverted” by barking.²⁷

Given so many options, it is no surprise that narratives that extend salvation to cynocephali prefer not to imagine a creature both saved and monstrous.²⁸ Most texts concerning the cynocephali do not refine or theorize their classificatory systems to decide absolutely whether the creatures are

24. *Ibid.*, 245.

25. Paul the Deacon, *History of the Lombards*, ed. Edward Peters, trans. William Dudley Foulke (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1974), 20.

26. Ister Aethicus, *Die Kosmographie des Aethicus*, ed. Otto Prinz (Munich: Monumenta Germaniae Historica, 1993), 114.

27. Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies*, I.16, 268, “Cynocephali quoque in India nasci perhibentur, quorum sunt canina capita, et omne verbum quod loquuntur intermixtis corrumpunt latratibus, et non homines, crudam carnem manducando, sed ipsas imitantur bestias.” My translation relies on his. For a discussion of this work, see *ibid.*, 86–115. The work has typically but debatably been ascribed to Aldhelm of Malmesbury: Friedman, *Monstrous Races*, 248–49 n43; Aldhelm of Malmesbury, *Aldhelm: The Prose Works*, ed. Michael Lapidge and Michael Herren (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1979), 186 n30; Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies*, 94–95.

28. David Williams, *Deformed Discourse: The Function of the Monster in Mediaeval Thought and Literature* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996), 295; Lecouteux, “Les Cynocéphales,” 127, references a story in which “touché par la grâce divine, ce géant cynocéphale retrouve un visage humain” (touched by divine grace, this giant cynocephalus regains a human face). For examples of such narratives, see “Passio sancti Christopheri Martyris,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 10 (1891): 395–96, and *Acta Sanctorum* 32.6, July 25, I.2. A similar process is at work in Horrall, *Cursor Mundi*, where the True Cross transforms the monstrous bodies of adoring Saracens into “riȝt kynde” (correct nature; 8124). I discuss cynocephali in more detail in an essay in the *Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous*.

animal or humans. Their general response is to obfuscate cynocephalic monstrousness, or, at best, to resort to Augustine's deferral of the responsibility for determination onto genealogical tracing to Adam and Eve. Without any recourse to cynocephalic genealogical records, the problem would remain unsolvable until Judgment Day. Not until then would the cynocephali be burned up and abandoned like the rest of the nonhuman world, or else, having been resurrected into "proper" human forms like other humans considered inadequate or excessive by dominant standards for the body,²⁹ would they finally be known as human. One study distinguishes itself amid the uncertainties and deferrals of all these other texts. This work, Ratramnus of Corbie's *Letter on the Cynocephali*³⁰ (written before 865), is remarkable for its focus on a single creature (in contrast to the teratological miscellanies of Augustine, Isidore, and the *Liber monstruorum*, among others), for its certainty about cynocephalic humanity, and for its eschewal of deliteralizing moralization in favor of practical missionary concerns. The letter responds to Ratramnus's fellow monk Rimbart, a missionary among the Scandinavians, who had apparently written to ask whether he should preach to the cynocephali. Claude Lecouteux and Ian Wood, like other scholars who have worked from records in Otto Höfler's *Kultische Geheimbünde der Germanen*, hypothesized that Rimbart had heard about a Norse warband who totemically associated themselves with dogs either through donning animal masks or through taking on the name *hundingr*. As evidence for such practices, Wood cites medieval Nordic animal masks made of felt, discovered in the harbor of the former Danish city of Hedeby (now Haithabu, in present-day Germany), and the Torslunda plaques, which show a wolf-man wearing clothes and shoes. Ratramnus's response therefore may provide indirect evidence of cultic hound practices among the Norse,³¹ or of Rimbart's credu-

29. On this point, see, for example, Augustine, *City of God*, XXII.19, 841–43, and "Enchiridion," 87, 324.

30. For the letter, which survives in a single eleventh-century manuscript, see Dümmler, *Epistolae variorum XII*, MGH Epistolae 6, 155–57 (another edition is available in *PL* 121: 1153–56). For a discussion of editions of the letter, see Jean Paul Bouhot, *Ratramne de Corbie: histoire littéraire et controverses doctrinales* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1976), 28–29 n9. Ratramnus is better known for the debate over the Eucharist he lost to Paschasius Radbertus (c. 785–c. 860): Paschasius argued that the historical body of Christ was actually present in the Eucharist; Ratramnus argued for only a symbolic presence: see Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, *The Growth of Medieval Theology (600–1300)*, vol. 3, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 74–80.

31. Dutton, *Carolingian Civilization*, 452, suggests that Rimbart had written this letter because he had displaced his uncertainty about the humanity of the people he worked among onto these creatures, or, perhaps, because the unruly peoples and climes of the North inspired him to turn his mind to analogous creatures. See also Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la lit-*

lous anthropology. Regardless, because Ratramnus still responded as if he were considering actual cynocephali, his letter possesses enormous value for studies in medieval teratology and especially for the history of the question of the human.

In the letter, Ratramnus compiles a cynocephalic ethnography, muses on an Isidoran fashion on portents, and, finally demonstrates incontrovertibly that the creatures possess reason. To do so, he combines a study of cynocephalic customs with two distinct Augustinian heuristics: from the *City of God* on descent from Adam, and from *On Free Will* on the human domination of animals as proof of human reason and animal irrationality. First, Ratramnus examines the cynocephalic voice and form, features that might have excluded the cynocephalus from humanity, according to the tradition Ratramnus had inherited. He observes:

forma capitis et latratus canum non hominibus, sed bestiis similes ostendit. Hominum denique est rotundo vertice caelum conspiciere, canum vero longo capite rostroque deducto terram intueri, et homines loquuntur, canes vero latrant. (155: 24–27)³²

the form of their heads and their canine barking shows that they are similar not to humans but to animals. In fact, the heads of humans are round and on top in order for them to see the heavens, while those of dogs are long and drawn out in a snout so that they can look at the ground. And humans speak, while dogs bark.

Although Ratramnus invokes both stereotypical human and animal forms, and the Augustinian and Isidoran differentiation of human voice from animal noise, he raises both points only to counter them with a list of behaviors that demonstrate cynocephalic humanity: the cynocephali live together in towns and engage in agriculture; they show themselves modest by wearing clothing; and they live together under a law: “Haec enim omnia rationalem quodammodo testificari videntur eis inesse animam” (all these things seem to demonstrate that some kind of rational soul is in them; 155: 34–35). Ratramnus also observes, “Homo vero a bestiis ratione tantummodo dis-

térature allemande, vol. 2, 23, and Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 137; Dutton, *Charlemagne's Moustache*, 45; and Ian Wood, “Christians and Pagans in Ninth-Century Scandinavia,” in *The Christianization of Scandinavia: Report of a Symposium held at Kungälv, Sweden 4–9 August 1985*, ed. Birgit Sawyer, Peter Sawyer, and Ian Wood (Alingsås, Sweden: Viktoria Bokförlag, 1987), 64–65.

32. My citations are keyed to the MGH edition by page and line number. In most cases, I follow the translation in Dutton, *Carolingian Civilization*, 452–55.

cernitur. Quae quod videtur inesse his de quibus loquimur, homines potius quam bestiae deputandi videntur” (the human can be distinguished from beasts only by reason. From these things, reason would seem to be in those of which we speak; they would seem to be regarded as humans rather than beasts; 156: 13–14). Finally, Ratramnus asserts that anyone who doubts the link between these behaviors and reason must himself lack reason (156: 9).

As convincing as these arguments might be, they do not entirely convince Ratramnus. He frequently resorts to the word *videri* (to seem): “videntur eis inesse animam,” “videtur inesse his,” “homines . . . videntur.” The cynocephali may have “rationalem *quodammodo* . . . animam” (some kind of rational soul; my emphasis). Neither the behaviors he has cited nor the teratologic traditions of Christopher and monstrous births to which he next refers provide him with a sure method for determining whether a worldly creature is reasonable and thus human. At this stage of his letter, all that Ratramnus tentatively allows is that to deny reason to the cynocephali would be irrational. Nothing allows him to transform his uncertain *videri* to the active, confident *videre* (to consider or to see) until he arrives at this, his definitive proof:

Accedit ad haec, quod scripta vestra testantur, domesticorum omne genus animalium, quae nostris in regionibus habentur, apud illos haberi. Hoc vero fieri posse, si bestialem et non rationalem animam haberent, nequaquam *video*; siquidem homini animantia terrae fuisse divinitus subjecta Geneseos lectione cognoscimus. Ut vero bestiae alterius a se generis animantia, et maxime domestici generis, curent et eis diligentiam adhibeant suisque cogant imperiis subjacere et usibus parere, sicut nec auditum ita nec creditum cognoscitur. (157: 10–15; my emphasis)

It is added to these things, to which your letter bears witness, that all the kinds of domesticated animals that are kept in our regions are kept among them. *I see* that this could in no way be if they had a bestial and not a rational soul, since the living things of the earth were subjected to men by heaven, as we know from reading Genesis. But it has never been heard or believed that animals of one kind can by themselves take care of other animals, especially those of a domestic kind, keep them, compel them to submit to their rule, and follow regular routines.

Ratramnus thus takes three steps, of which only the third certainly establishes these creatures as human and worthy of Rimbert’s missionary effort. First, he silently eliminates their anthropophagy. Next, like Ctesias of Cnidus, he grants them agriculture, clothing, modesty, and other stereotypically human cultural

characteristics, but, unlike Ctesias, he gives them clothing not of leaves or linen, but of animal skins, which supports his third and clearest proof: that the cynocephali keep and subjugate domestic animals, “suis cogant imperiis subjacere.”³³ It is the total assurance of this clause, overstuffed with three synonyms for command, that confers humanity upon its actors.

Something nevertheless still continues to trouble Ratramnus, for he goes on to observe, “At vero cenocephali, cum domesticorum animalium dicuntur habere multitudinem, eis minime convenit bestialis feritas, quorum animalia domestica lenitate mansuefiunt” (but since the cynocephali are said to keep a multitude of domestic animals, then animal fierceness does not fit them, because they tame their domestic animals gently; 157: 15–18). His claims for the gentleness of the cynocephali may be ascribed to his vocational habits: as a monk, he was trained to adopt a stance perhaps best expressed by Saint Martin of Tours’ declaration to the Roman emperor Julian: “Up to now I have fought for you; allow me now to fight for God . . . I am a soldier of Christ, I am not allowed to fight.”³⁴ Ratramnus may also be recalling the moral tradition that characterized violent humans as beastlike: Ambrose’s *Hexameron* warns, “If you revel in ferocity, the dominant trait of savage beasts for which reason they are slain, see that you, too, may not become a victim of your own atrocious cruelty,”³⁵ or, to cite an example roughly contemporary to Ratramnus, the poem “Contra Iudices” (Against Judges) by Theodulf of Orléans, pleads:

O genus, exemplum fugito, mortale, ferarum,
Nec homo sit homini quod fera torva ferae (911–12)

33. Others readers of Ratramnus’s letter have also observed the importance it places on animal domestication: Dutton, *Charlemagne’s Moustache*, 46; Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la littérature allemande*, vol. 1, 162–70; Lecouteux, *Les monstres dans la pensée médiévale européenne*, 189–94.

34. From the life of Martin by Sulpicius Severus, translated in Athanasius et al., *Early Christian Lives*, trans. Carolinne White (London: Penguin, 1998), 138–39. For more on such attitudes, see Lester K. Little, “Anger in Monastic Curses,” in Barbara H. Rosenwein, ed., *Anger’s Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 12–27, and Boulc’h, “Le statut de l’animal,” 41–59. Boulc’h errs in not seeing the wariness about violence against animals as part of a dynamic that also required such violence. Monastic attitudes towards violence did not, in this period and region, preclude monks from playing an essential role in military operations; see the comments on monastic attitudes towards military violence in Bernard Bachrach, *Early Carolingian Warfare: Prelude to Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 160–61. In several places, e.g., 65–67, Bachrach also discusses the *De ordini palatii* of Adalhard (d. 826), a treatise on military organization by an abbot of Corbie (and nephew of Pippin) of the generation just prior to Ratramnus.

35. *Hexameron* VI.3.10 in Ambrose, *Hexameron*, 233–34.

O mortal race, flee the example of the wild beasts
and let no man be to a man what a cruel beast is to a beast.³⁶

Understood within this moral tradition, Ratramnus's characterization of the cynocephali as gentle keeps the cynocephali from reverting to the animality from which he had just rescued them. He has, after all, defined violence as animal, as "*bestialis feritas*," having the support of Isidore's *Etymologies*: "They are called beasts (*bestia*) from the force (*vis*) with which they attack"³⁷ But Ratramnus's claims for his humanized monsters can work only partially, as the cynocephalic domestication of their animals straddles the divide between gentleness and violence: the cynocephali wear hides; the excessiveness of the clause "*suis cogant imperiis subjacere*" itself presents their rule as precarious and despotic; and, caught in such overwhelming dominion, their domesticated animals cannot escape their condition, no matter how gently Ratramnus claims it is enforced. Ratramnus has not purged violence from the subjugation of animals: he has in fact preserved its aspects of mastery for his newly named humans, while attempting to displace the violence from the enactors onto the "fierce" victims. To recall Žižek's distinction again, Ratramnus's attention to the subjective violence of the domesticated animals masks the objective violence of cynocephalic—and, by extension, human—ascendancy. Typically, the mask is a symptom, in this case, of Ratramnus's wish to elude his own knowledge of the impossibility of being human. The cynocephalic head, terrifying, carnivorous, yet in the place of reason, materializes the ineluctable and dehumanizing violence of the human condition. Like any human, the cynocephali must dominate animals; but to do so, and thus to claim reason for themselves and deny it to animals, requires violence; but to be violent means acting like a beast. Without "*bestialis feritas*" there is no claim to possess reason, and thus no claim to be human; but neither is there a human with it.

36. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Moustache*, 48, directed me to this poem. The Latin is from Ernst Dümmler, ed., *Poetae latini aevi carolini*, MGH Poetae, 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881); the translation is from Nikolai A. Alexandrenko, "The Poetry of Theodulf of Orleans: A Translation and Critical Study" (PhD. diss., Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, 1970), 200.

37. Isidore, *Etymologies*, 251. Note that the introduction to this translation observes, xii, that the "b" sound had become for many indistinguishable from a "v." See also Aquinas *ST* 2a2ae, q. 159, a. 2, "Whether cruelty differs from savagery or brutality," where he observes, "'Savagery' and 'brutality' take their names from a likeness to wild beasts which are also described as savage." An early articulation of this point appears in Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *De Clementia*, ed. and trans. Susanna Braund (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 25.1, 137, "That frenzy of enjoying gore and wounds and of rejecting humanity and turning into a creature of the forest is the frenzy of a wild beast." I thank Erica Fudge, "Two Ethics: Killing Animals in the Past and the Present," in Animal Studies Group, *Killing Animals*, 99–119, at 101, for directing me to Seneca.

II.

The Wild Herdsman

Early in *Yvain*, Calogrenant tells his fellow knights about the humiliating defeat dealt him by Esclados, the Knight of the Fountain. Calogrenant discovered the fountain through the help of a hideous peasant, whom he encountered in a woodland clearing thronged with noisy and equally terrifying animals. The peasant, commonly known to scholars as the Wild Herdsman, may be human, but is marred by its polymorphic animality. Scholars have often remarked on the Herdsman's pedigree in the exemplars of ugliness in various foundational rhetorical works, such as a letter by the fifth-century nobleman and bishop Sidonius Apollinaris describing a glutton, Gnatho, who has "elephantine" ears and a nose "large in its openings and constricted at its bridge, gaping wide enough to give you the creeps,"³⁸ or, from Chrétien's own era, the rhetorical manual of Matthew of Vendôme, which describes a slave, Davus, as "a clod of excrement, nature's disgrace, a burden to the earth, / a glutton at the table, a disgusting house of dung," and a hideous woman, Beroe, whose "ears flow with filth" and whose "flat" nose "vomits lethal gusts."³⁹ Marcolf, the peasant satirist in the widespread disputation literature of Marcolf and Solomon, also resembles the Herdsman; in one fifteenth-century version though Marcolf is "curta et grossa" (short and fat), he, like the herdsman, "caput habebat grande [et] frontem latissimum"⁴⁰ (had a huge head and a very wide forehead). But for all the

38. Sidonius Apollinaris, *Poems and Letters*, trans. W. B. Anderson, vol. 2 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), III.xiii.6, 53.

39. Matthew of Vendôme, *Ars versificatoria* = *The Art of the Versemaker*, trans. Roger P. Parr (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1981), 35 and 39.

40. Quoted from Maria Norello, "Note sulla tradizione Marcolfiana con particolare riferimento ai dialoghi francesi di Marcoul et Salemon," *Studi mediolatini e volgari* 33 (1987): 29–30. For a recent study on this tradition, see Nancy Mason Bradbury, "Rival Wisdom in the Latin Dialogue of Solomon and Marcolf," *Speculum* 83 (2008): 331–65. For more on the rhetorical tradition of ugliness, see Paul Salmon, "The Wild Man in 'Iwein' and Medieval Descriptive Technique," *The Modern Language Review* 56 (1961): 520–28, to which I am indebted for the reference to Sidonius Apollinaris, and Jan Ziolkowski, "Avatars of Ugliness in Medieval Literature," *The Modern Language Review* 79 (1984): 1–20. At 9, Ziolkowski considers the rhetorical background of the Wild Herdsman in detail. See also Elizabeth A. Hubble, "Hideous a desmesure: Monsters and Monstrous Knights in Early French Romance," *Comitatus* 35 (2004): 45–70, and Micheline de Combarieu, "Image et représentation du vilain dans les chansons de geste (et dans quelques autres textes médiévaux)," in *Exclus et systèmes d'exclusion dans la littérature et la civilisation médiévales: Actes du colloque organisé par le C.U.E.R.M.A. à Aix-en-Provence, les 4–5–6 mars 1977* (Paris: Champion, 1978), 9–26. For particular attention to the traditional ugliness of peasants, see Braet, "The Image of the Rustic," 195–97.

similarities between Chrétien's Herdsman and his rhetorical ancestors (and possible descendants), the Herdsman stands apart. The animal features of Gnatho and Davus function primarily as moral symptoms, as warnings to others to moderate their appetites or to value their own elite social status more highly. In contrast, the Herdsman is no moral monster; we know nothing of his sexual or alimentary habits, nor does he even mock social codes, as Marcolf does. Unlike the features of Gnatho and the others, the Herdsman's mean far less than they *are*; his features do not symbolize some moral state, but rather are aspects of what the Herdsman is, even while never quite indicating the precise nature of his being.

When Calogrenant says that the Herdsman "resambloit mor"⁴¹ (286; resembled a Moor), he evokes the animalistic Moors of chivalric narrative, such as those of the *Chanson de Roland*: those of Ociant, who "braient e henissent" (bray and whinny; 3526); those of Arguille, who "si cume chen i glatissent" (yelp like dogs; 3527); and those of Micenes, who are "seient ensemment cume porc" (hairy just like pigs; 3523).⁴² But for all their animality, the *Chanson*'s Moors also fight with knights as knights. The Herdsman, on the other hand, wields a club⁴³ rather than a sword or lance and wears not armor but "deux cuirs de nouvel escorchiés, / de .ii. toriaus ou de .ii. bués" (two hides newly skinned from two bulls or oxen; 311–12); in other words, he compounds his difference from Calogrenant by possessing none of the essential equipment of chivalric culture. The Wild Herdsman only partially resembles Moors, who in turn partially resemble animals, but at first glance, he is neither clearly: thus Calogrenant's comparison reaffirms rather than resolves the Herdsman's ambiguity. The Herdsman's face, a far-rago of animal forms—owl, cat, wolf, elephant, and wild boar—offers a

41. All Old French citations from Chrétien are from Chrétien de Troyes, *Romans*, ed. Michel Zink (Paris: Le Livre de poche, 1994). The Yvain edition in this volume, which uses Paris, BN fr. 1433, is by David F. Hult; I have compared Hult's edition to the uses of Paris, BN fr. 794, the "Guoit Manuscript," in Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au Lion (Yvain)*, ed. Mario Roques (Paris: H. Champion, 1999), and Chrétien de Troyes, *The Knight with the Lion or Yvain (Le Chevalier au Lion)*, ed. and trans. William W. Kibler (New York: Garland, 1985). There are no significant differences between BN fr. 1433 and BN fr. 794 for the points I make here. I have been guided by Kibler in my translations, making alterations where necessary.

42. Gerard J. Brault, ed., *The Song of Roland: An Analytical Edition*. II. Oxford Text and English Translation (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978). For Saracen portrait conventions, see C. Meredith Jones, "The Conventional Saracen of the Songs of Geste," *Speculum* 17 (1942): 201–25, and, more recently, Suzanne Conklin Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100–1450* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 140–7, 155–99.

43. A caveat, although not one applicable in this case: though the club is a stereotypically savage weapon, it could also be used in judicial duels and thus also could represent civilization: see Faith Lyons, "Le baton des champions dans Yvain," *Romania* 91 (1970): 97–100.

resolution by presenting him as more animal than human, as does his initial silence, in which the Herdsman mutely stares at the knight, saying “nient plus c’une beste feïst” (no more than a beast would; 322). The apparent lack of language, perhaps even more than the Herdsman’s visage, causes Calogrenant to remark that “je quidai quë il n’eüst / Raison, ne parler ne seüst” (I believed that he did not have reason and did not know how to speak; 323–24). The conundrum here is not one of morals, or even of aesthetics, but of species.

It is no surprise, then, that Calogrenant first asks a taxonomic question: “Va, cor me di / se tu es boine chose ou non” (Go on, tell me if you are a good thing or not; 326–27). The Herdsman simply replies that “je sui uns hom” (I am a man; 328). Calogrenant persists by asking the Herdsman what kind of man he is. The Herdsman replies: “tes com tu voi. / Je ne sui autres nule fois” (just as you see. I’m never anything else; 330–31). His statement argues against his own apparently monstrous ambiguity and in favor of his natural, that is, nonwondrous existence as a human.⁴⁴ The conversation then turns to the “tors salvages”⁴⁵ (wild bulls; 277) that accompany the Herdsman. Frightened by the animals’ wild energy and noise, Calogrenant marvels that they should be tamable: “ne cuit qu’en plain ne an boscage / puisse an garder beste sauvage, / n’en autre liu, pour nule cose, / s’elle n’est loïfe u anclose” (I don’t believe anyone can keep a wild beast on the plain or in the woods, nor anywhere else, in any way, unless it is tied up or fenced in; 335–38). The Herdsman explains that he keeps the beasts in submission by battering them with the “pains que j’ai et durs et forz” (strong and hard fists that I have; 346), while they “de paour tramblent / et tout en viron moi s’asamblent, / aussi com pour merchi crïer” (tremble in fear and gather around me as if to cry for mercy; 347–49). Then he demands that Calogrenant tell him, in turn, who he is and what he is doing. Calogrenant responds

44. Francis Dubost, “Merveilleux et fantastique dans le Chevalier au lion,” in Jean Dufournet, ed., *Le Chevalier au lion de Chrétien de Troyes: approches d’un chef-d’œuvre* (Paris: Champion, 1988), 75, similarly remarks, “Contre toute attente, le vilain monstrueux se définit d’abord comme un homme en insistant sur la stabilité de sa nature et la permanence de sa forme” (Surprisingly, the monstrous peasant defines himself first of all as a human by insisting on the stability of his nature and the permanence of his form).

45. Hult describes the line’s second half as a “vers très problématique.” He reads it as “tors sauvages et esperars” (wild and excited bulls); Roques as “tors salvages, ors, et lieparz” (wild bulls, bears, and leopards); and, because Yvain otherwise references only the Herdsman’s bulls, Kibler as “tors sauvages et espaars” (wild bulls at large; 280), which contrasts with “loïfe u enclose” (338). Brian Woledge, *Commentaire sur Yvain* (Le Chevalier au Lion) *au Chrétien de Troyes* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1986), 75–76, observing that the Welsh Owein depicts its Herdsman among deer, lions, serpents, and other animals, proposes that the line derives from a source, shared by Owein, in which the Herdsman husbands a great variety of otherwise untamable animals.

that he is “uns chevaliers” (a knight; 356) seeking either “aventures, pour esprouver / ma proeche et mon hardement” (adventure to prove my prowess and hardiness; 360–61) or at least a “merveilles” (364). The Herdsman gives Calogrenant the marvelous itinerary the knight seeks, but explains that “d’aventure ne sai je rien, / n’onques mais n’en oï parler” (I know nothing of adventures, nor have I heard talk of it; 366–67). And with that, Calogrenant departs, to be defeated by Esclados, who will himself be defeated and killed, years later, by Calogrenant’s vengeful cousin, Yvain, the true focus of Chrétien’s romance.

Critics have typically analyzed the encounter between Calogrenant and Herdsman as a meeting of opposites: the knight represents the “plus haute perfections” of “les valeurs humaines et sociales” (the highest perfection of human and social values), while the bestial peasant “représente le point bas où l’humanité se dégage à peine de l’animalité”⁴⁶ (represents the lowest point at which humanity barely separates itself from animality). These interpretative schema underlay appraisals such as those of Penelope Reed Doob, who declares the Herdsman “utterly alien to the rules of men”; or Eugene Vance, who sees in the Wild Herdsman and Calogrenant a “clearcut opposition between city and the forest” in which the former signifies “law or reason” and the latter “bestial passion”; or Donald Maddox, who somewhat differs from Vance in calling the Herdsman a member of “a twilight zone between nature and culture” whose violence aligns him with brutal animals, which submit only to force.⁴⁷ Readings concentrating on the brutishness, primitivism, or purported appetitive excess of the Herdsman suggest in turn the readings of medieval giants by critics such as Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Geraldine Heng. Cohen and Heng argue that chivalric narratives included giants in order to fantasize about conquest and to project onto giants those qualities of sexual, corporeal, and alimentary excess that the texts pretended were alien to the dominant culture. In these interpretations, giants are not just marvels, adversaries, or uncivilized barbarians: they also function oppo-

46. Dubost, “Merveilleux,” in Dufournet, *Approches*, 74. Also see Jean Frappier, *Étude sur Yvain ou le Chevalier au Lion de Chrétien de Troyes* (Paris: Société d’édition d’enseignement supérieur, 1969), 148, who suggests that “Sous le couvert de l’humour et de la verve caricaturale, n’a-t-il pas voulu rappeler à son public qu’il existait une humanité dehors des cours chevalersques et des salon courtois?” (Under cover of humor and spirited caricature, didn’t he wish to remind his public that a humanity existed outside the chivalric courts and courtly halls?).

47. Penelope Reed Doob, *Nebuchadnezzar’s Children: Conventions in Madness in Middle English Literature* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974), 137; Donald Maddox, *The Arthurian Romances of Chrétien de Troyes: Once and Future Fictions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 55; Eugene Vance, *From Topic to Tale: Logic and Narrativity in the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 59 and 64.

sitionally as bad or inadequate humans to contrast with the heroic humans foregrounded by chivalric narrative as corporeally normal and as paragons of self-control.⁴⁸ These readings work, since the Herdsman does distort, exaggerate, or reverse many of the fundamental values and behaviors of chivalry. His body, “grans et hideus a desmesure” (exceedingly large and hideous; 287), parodies that of Calogrenant, which is “mout avenans” (very handsome/well-proportioned; 58).⁴⁹ His face, a mass of animal shapes, transforms the human head into a sign of irrationality, while the mounted Calogrenant embodies the rhetorical cliché of “horse and rider” used in moral literature to portray the mastery of the rational soul over the corporeal vices.⁵⁰ The Herdsman’s methods of governance are likewise a grotesque parody of chivalric culture. As Joseph M. Sullivan remarks, the Wild Herdsman on his stump, holding a club, resembles a king on a throne holding a mace; he even imitates court fashions by wearing a cloak—admittedly, made of uncured hides—fastened at the neck.⁵¹ The Herdsman is a ruler in fact as well as appearance, for, as he brags, he calms the “grant bruit” (280; great noise) and fighting of the animals of his “court” by battering them, all the while ignoring their cries: “Ainsi,” he concludes, “sui de mes bestes sire” (353; thus I am lord of my beasts). In comparison, near the romance’s end, after Gawain and Yvain have stopped fighting by each claiming to be defeated, Arthur “oï les” (listens to them; 6357) and is moved to ratify the peace because the two knights are “enpirié en pluseurs lex” (wounded in several places; 6361).⁵² In sum, the Herdsman is a material representation of the excessiveness of those who refuse to accept the self-governance imposed

48. Heng, *Empire of Magic*, 35–45, argues that the giant of Mount St. Michel embodies in the very heart of pilgrim Europe memories of crusade anthropophagy. Cohen, *Of Giants*, distills his insights in several places, e.g., 82, “The knight defeats in the giant those nonteleological desires that, when read back through the cultural matrix of chivalry, represent every vice that must be evacuated to construct both the orderly Socius and the properly gendered hero.” See also, for example, Martha Nussbaum, *Disgust, Shame, and the Law* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 219–20: “by casting shame outwards, by branding the faces and the bodies of others, normals achieve a type of surrogate bliss; they satisfy their infantile wish for control and invulnerability . . . the normal is a thoroughly normative notion, and a kind of surrogate perfection or invulnerability.”

49. See Adolf Tobler and Erhard Lommatzsch, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch*, 11 vols. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1925), s.v., “avenance,” and Frédéric Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l’ancienne langue française*, 10 vols. (Paris: F. Vieweg, 1881), s. v. “avenance” def. 2.

50. See Voisenet, *Bêtes et hommes*, 43.

51. Joseph M. Sullivan, “Kalogreant/Calogrenant, Space, and Communication in Hartmann’s *Iwein* and Chrétien’s *Yvain*,” *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies* 42 (2006): 7.

52. For more on the romance’s ending, with particular attention to the tricks of the law, see Fredric L. Cheyette and Howell Chickering, “Love, Anger, and Peace: Social Practice and Poetic Play in the Ending of *Yvain*,” *Speculum* 80 (2005): 75–117.

by chivalry, “a control mechanism,” as Cohen describes it, “masquerading as a code of ethics.”⁵³

Having raised the possibility of a (distorted) noble herdsman, the romance then redraws the class distinction between Herdsman and knight even more firmly when the Herdsman asks Calogrenant to identify himself. Although the Herdsman claims a likeness between himself and Calogrenant by declaring himself “uns hom,” the knight declares in turn that he is “uns chevaliers” seeking “avantures, por esprouver / ma proeche et mon hardement.” Significantly, Calogrenant’s answer befuddles the Herdsman, who despite his costume, majesty, and court cannot comprehend the chivalric jargon, and who compounds his ignorance by misidentifying the gold of the magic basin as iron, mistaking a noble substance for a base one.⁵⁴ In his failure of comprehension, the Herdsman now fully emerges as a peasant, useful only for tending animals and for ineptly directing knights toward the main plot line of a noble narrative. This sharp contrast between Calogrenant and Herdsman may be understood as a way for Chrétien to test a declaration he made early in *Yvain*: “encor vaut mix, che m’est a vis, / un courtois mors c’uns vilains vis” (it seems to me that a dead noble is worth much more than a living peasant; 31–32). Initially Calogrenant has little value even as a “cortois vis”: he wanders “seus comme païsans” (alone like a peasant; 176); can only inadequately describe the beauty of a vavasor’s daughter; is terrified by a herdsman; is humiliated by Esclados; and then slinks back to court “honteusement” (shamefully; 558) without his armor.⁵⁵ But regardless of Calogrenant’s ineptitude, or the strength and indeed the affability of the Herdsman, Calogrenant still shows himself to be better proportioned, culturally superior, and if not brave then at least willing to fight: thus, even as a terrible knight, Calogrenant has greater worth than a “vilains vis.” More-

53. Cohen, *Of Giants*, 78.

54. I take this observation from Christine Ferlampin-Acher, *Merveilles et topique merveilleuse dans les romans médiévaux* (Paris: Champion, 2003), 123 and 422. Her reading of the Herdsman, 32, as a “créature monstrueuse proche de l’animalité” (monstrous creature close to animality) is typical.

55. The analysis of Calogrenant in Leigh A. Arrathoon, “Jacques de Vitry, the Tale of Calogrenant, La Chastelaine de Vergi, and the Genres of Medieval Narrative Fiction,” in *The Craft of Fiction: Essays in Medieval Poetics*, ed. Leigh A. Arrathoon (Rochester, MI: Solaris Press, 1984), 281–368, at 311–12, inspires my attention to the knight’s incompetence; in comparison, Yvain, a superior knight even before his transformation into the Knight with the Lion, does not neglect to remark on the great beauty of the vavasor’s daughter, “que n’ot conté Calogrenans” (782; which Calogrenant had not recounted). Marie-Luce Chénier, *Le Chevalier errant dans les romans arthuriens en vers des XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Geneva: Droz, 1986), 123, calls my attention to an explanatory line in Chrétien’s *Erec et Enide*, where King Lac declares that “ne doit seus aler filz de roi” (a king’s son should not go alone; 2706); Jean-Marie Fritz, ed., in *Chrétien de Troyes, Romans*.

over, Chrétien considers Calogrenant's story to be worth telling, and builds that value into the narrative itself when Calogrenant's fellow knights listen to his story and Guinevere retells it to Arthur; but no one ever wonders how the Herdsman came to be in the woods or what happened to him after Calogrenant leaves him. The difference between *courtois mors* and *vilains vis* is that even a bad knight merits memorialization in narrative, while a peasant, living or dead, is beneath notice except to remind knights of what they should not be. This distinction lays the groundwork for Yvain's critique and renovation of chivalric violence:⁵⁶ having sluiced the excesses of chivalry into the Herdsman, and then sealed this excess up in the Herdsman's peasantry, Chrétien is able to consider Yvain, the murderer of Esclados, as guilty not of low-class violence but rather of acting *too much* like a knight.

The dynamic suggests a still more complex understanding of the contrast between Herdsman and Knight. Abjection attempts to dissociate the most repulsive aspects of a subject's self from the subject by dumping them onto some derided other. What is abjected is thus a sign of shame rather than a simple sign of difference. The brutishness of giants is not simply different from chivalric violence, but rather is a desublimated manifestation of the traits lurking at the heart of chivalric selfhood. By defeating giants, knights attempt to sever the link between their ideal chivalric selves and their own appetites, thus attempting to present themselves post facto as never having needed to abject anything. The paradigm of this dynamic for both Cohen and Heng is the Giant of Mt. St. Michel. In the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* the giant eats a meal of seven children "chopped in a chargeur of chalk-white silver, / With pickle and powder of precious spices, / And piment full plenteous of Portingale wines"⁵⁷ (1026–28); his belt, festooned with the beards of conquered kings, and his wealth and appetite attest to his imperial might. He is no simple monstrous "other," but rather mirrors back to Arthur the normative economic and military exploitations of the elite, per the operations of Lacan's formulation of communication, as repeatedly summarized by Žižek, "in which the sender gets back from the receiver-addressee his own message in its inverted—that is, true—form."⁵⁸ For Arthur to defeat this "intimate

56. It is customary to understand Yvain as learning over the course of the romance to redirect his violence in more socially beneficial directions: e.g., Maddox, *Arthurian Romances*, 51–81, and Robert W. Hanning, "The Social Significance of Twelfth-Century Chivalric Romance," *Medievalia et Humanistica* n.s. 3 (1972): 14.

57. Larry Dean Benson and Edward E. Foster, eds., *King Arthur's Death: The Middle English Stanzaic Morte Arthur and Alliterative Morte Arthure*, rev. ed. (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1994).

58. For example, Žižek, *Parallax View*, 341 and 365, and *Violence*, 118.

stranger”⁵⁹ just before he himself “swallows” Gaul by absorbing it into his empire and conquers its kings allows Arthur to abject his own violent appetites onto the giant and then to emerge from the conflict as a hero, now putatively disassociated from the constitutive excess of kingship and chivalry; so too with Yvain’s defeat of the giant Harpin de la Montagne. Harpin murders knights, fights with a club, and threatens to have a noblewoman gang-raped by his servants, but, like the *juventus* Yvain, he devastates land and seek to acquire a wife.⁶⁰ Like these other giants, the Herdsman is too reminiscent of knights. He may rule over his animals only through merciless force, but the same might be said for Arthur’s court in *Yvain*’s opening scene. Contention erupts among the knights almost as soon as Chrétien has introduced them: Calogrenant is telling his story when he leaps to his feet to honor the queen; Kay lambastes him for his ostentatious courtesy; Calogrenant in turn likens Kay to a dunghap (116). The squabble ends only because Guinevere commands Calogrenant to ignore Kay’s insult and to keep talking. Calogrenant obeys her command, but not until he has declared that he finds it “mout grief” (very painful; 142), less preferable, in fact, to having one of his eyes torn out (144): nothing but his fear of the queen’s anger compels his obedience (146): only later will Arthur’s milder rule of legal trickery substitute for Guinevere’s diktat. In this regard, like the giant of Mt. St. Michel and Harpin de la Montagne, the Herdsman appears not as chivalry’s opposite, nor as its uncontrolled excess, but as its repulsive and violent inner truth, demystified.

Apart from his size and appearance, though, the Herdsman has little in common with the anthropophagous giant of Mt. St. Michel, or with other twelfth-century giants in French literature, such as William of Orange’s savage, comic companion Rainoart⁶¹ or the Herdsman’s closest analogue, the similarly animal-featured ox-driver that Aucussin meets in the forest.⁶² He does not attack women or Calogrenant, nor does the gore of his victims stain his face; he does not proclaim his allegiance to Islam, nor does he convert to Christianity upon his defeat; and unlike *Aucussin et Nicolette*’s giant, he requires no assistance from the knight who meets him. Moreover, far from

59. See, for example, the discussion of *extimité* and the “intimate stranger,” in Cohen, *Of Giants*, xii.

60. See *juventus*, see the classic article “Youth in Aristocratic Society,” in Georges Duby, *The Chivalrous Society*, trans. Cynthia Postan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 112–22. For a discussion of the “dangerous porousness” between Harpin and normative knighthood, see Cohen, *Of Giants*, 77–80.

61. See Aliscans in Joan Ferrante, trans., *Guillaume d’Orange: Four Twelfth-Century Epics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974).

62. *Aucassin et Nicolette*, trans. and ed. By Jean Dufournet (Paris: Flammarion, 1984), Section XXIV, 114–19.

being an agent of disorder and rapine, the Herdsman behaves industriously by tending his animals in an “essars” (clearing; 277), which suggests that the Herdsman, like many other twelfth-century peasants, has transformed a section of forest into a pasture: this is less a zone of wildness than a zone of the emergence of human culture from the woods.⁶³ The most signal difference, however, is that no fight takes place. Although Calogrenant expects to be attacked when the Herdsman leaps to his feet (314–19), the Herdsman radically departs as much from critical as from narrative expectations: he behaves as neither brute, buffoon, nor suppliant; he is content just to talk and to explain his way of life. Calogrenant will eventually distinguish himself from the Herdsman through his cultural superiority, but for now, he recognizes the Herdsman as like him, not as his own abjected selfhood, but simply as a fellow “hom.”

In focusing on the two extremes of humanity represented by Calogrenant and the Herdsman, on the Herdsman’s appearance rather than his actions, and on the possibilities or indeed the impossibilities of the properly chivalric, the criticism has ignored how the scene prompts a consideration of the human, first and foundationally, and how the Herdsman’s declaration of humanity depends on his boast of dominating fierce beasts without fear of harm, a dominion over animals witnessing to the presence and operations of a capacity that can be called, following Augustine, “reason.” Despite Calogrenant’s initial misapprehension, the Herdsman is neither a voiceless animal nor only a monstrous counterpart, whether internal or external, to chivalric culture; he is human, and human by virtue of his mastery of animals. He declares when he beats his animals that they respond “*aussi com pour merchi crïer*” (as if to cry for mercy; 349; my emphasis). He hears his animals as imitating the pleas of humans, who alone among worldly creatures have the right to protest ill treatment. The animals’ cries can only cement the distinction the Wild Herdsman draws between them and humans; so long as their cries are recognized as being only imitative and inauthentic, the animals’ suffering, unlike that of Calogrenant, Esclados, or Yvain, will not be mourned or redressed by anyone.⁶⁴ The Herdsman commits an anti-*prosopopeia*—the trope which gives

63. For “essars” and the foundations of new villages, especially in twelfth-century France, see Roland Bechmann, *Trees and Man: The Forest in the Middle Ages*, trans. Katharyn Dunham (New York: Paragon House, 1990), 57–65 and 74.

64. The critics tend to admire the Herdsman precisely for this subjugation. Tony Hunt, “Le Chevalier au Lion: Yvain Lionheart,” in Norris J. Lacy and Joan Tasker Grimbart, eds., *A Companion to Chrétien de Troyes* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2005), 159, is typical: “Far from being an evil shape-shifter, as the knight fears, he is both benign and efficient in fulfilling his role in the social order” (this restates his earlier reading in Tony Hunt, *Chrétien de Troyes: Yvain (le Chevalier au lion)* (London: Grant & Cutler, 1986), 26). Also see Pierre Jonin, “La révision d’un topos ou la noblesse du vilain,” in *Mélanges Jean Larmat: regards*

an imagined or absent person, animal, or object a voice—for he denies his oxen a voice by refusing to recognize that they too have a face (*prosonon*); at the same time, by confining them in the “as if” his speech produces, the Herdsman also presents both Calogrenant and himself as possessing authentic voices, which need not be rendered through a *prosopopeia* to be heard. Yvain notably does not present this humanist refusal to listen as an inevitability, for it provides a counterexample of human-animal companionability when Yvain’s lion, like the Herdsman’s animals, pleads for peace and companionship.⁶⁵ While Yvain recognizes the lion’s gestures as meaningful—“Mesire Yvains par varité / set que li leons l’en merchie” (my lord Yvain indeed knew that the lion thanked him; 3403–4)—and actionable, since Yvain makes the lion his companion, albeit one whose appetites are subordinate to his human master, the Herdsman refuses to “know” that his animals can communicate any desire for mercy. Yvain’s lion’s pleas show that the Herdsman’s beasts lack speech not simply because they are animals, but because the Herdsman refuses to hear them.⁶⁶ As in *Sidrak and Bokkus* the Herdsman uses animal subjugation to declare himself human, to degrade his beasts as only beasts, and to posit reason—here evidenced as heedable speech—as an exclusively human trait. Therefore, the Herdsman’s declaration that the oxen’s sounds are only “ausi con” they were pleas is as much an act of subjugation as is his beating them: one is simply more obvious than the other. Having established his position, the Herdsman finally can declare, “Ainsi sui de mes bestes sire” (thus I am lord of my beasts; 353), a phrase that serves not only as a distorted echo of the lordship exercised by Yvain’s nobles, but also as a reiteration of his opening declaration, “je sui uns hom.”⁶⁷

sur le Moyen Âge et la Renaissance: histoire, langue, et littérature, ed. Maurice Accarie and Jean Larmat (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1982), 187–88, who applauds the Herdsman’s rule, and M. L. Carter, “The Psychological Symbolism of the Magic Fountain and the Giant Herdsman in Yvain,” *Mythlore* 11 (1985): 31, who sees the Herdsman as vainly attempting to impart a lesson to the knights about the proper use of the passions. Another reading astonishingly admires the Herdsman for protecting weak animals from the strong (Rasmus Thorning Hansen, “Monsters and Miracles in Yvain,” in *Monsters, Marvels, and Miracles: Imaginary Journeys and Landscapes in the Middle Ages*, ed. Leif Songergaard and Rasmus Thorning Hansen [Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2005], 123). All these critics see the Herdsman’s rule as a praiseworthy analog to intrahuman government (Jonin, for example, means to compliment him by calling him a “seneschal”).

65. The chief difference between Yvain and the lion in these gestures is anatomical: the lion uses its paws, whereas Yvain, before Laudine, uses his hands.

66. I am inspired here by Butler, *Frames of War*, 51, where she remarks that “the tacit interpretative scheme that divides worthy from unworthy lives works fundamentally through the senses, differentiating the cries we hear from those we cannot, the sights we can see from those we cannot, and likewise at the level of touch and even smell.”

67. Per Nykrog, *Chrétien de Troyes: Romancier discutable* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1996), 156, stands apart from the critical commonplaces by observing, “tout monstueux qu’il

Yet the Herdsman's violent efforts fail to fully extricate him from animality or identify him with Calogrenant, since other heuristics for humanity and culture, also based around the technologies and cultures of violence toward animals, operate against him.⁶⁸ The Herdsman's violent expropriation of another creature's skin for clothing distinguishes him as a human and as possessing a minimal culture, even if it is one utterly opposed to the sartorial splendor proper to the martial elite.⁶⁹ But his hides also recall those worn by Benedict of Nursia in Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, which cause shepherds to mistake him for a wild animal.⁷⁰ The Herdsman's skins are, moreover, "nouvel escorchiéz" (310), newly skinned, raw, not yet subjected to technology; they look too much like what they are, skin, whether that of an animal or of the Herdsman himself, as if they were yet another one of the animal characteristics of the Herdsman's body-menagerie.⁷¹ He also subjugates his oxen not with the "grant machue" (huge club; 291) he carries but rather by grappling them with his fists. No other human in *Yvain* fights without a weapon: Calogrenant sets out on his adventures "arméz de totes armeüres / si com chevaliers dovoit estre" (entirely armed as a knight should be; 178–79) and fights the spring's guardian with a lance; Yvain hunts with bow and arrow even at the nadir of his madness;⁷² and both the giant Harpin

est, *c'est un homme*, car il peut parler et il a de la raison, même si elle est fruste. Bien plus: c'est parce qu'il est un homme qu'il est capable de maîtriser les bêtes sauvages" (original emphasis; as monstrous as he is, he is a man, because he can speak and he has reason, even if it is unsophisticated. Moreover, it is because he is a man that he can master wild beasts). He might have better concluded by reversing his final statement.

68. Vance, *Topic to Tale*, 67–68, "the man-beast's grades in the mechanical arts are also very low. Instead of wearing artifacts of woven textiles, he wears skins that have been torn from freshly killed animals and then not even cured or tanned. Instead of bearing a sword, he either fights with his fist like a primitive human, or he wields a club that, in the chivalric perspective, is the 'minimal' weapon and is linked to the iconographic convention of the wild man. Instead of laboring in the agricultural world of field and pasture, the man-beast inhabits the forest." Since Calogrenant encounters the Wild Herdsman in an "essars," he in fact is creating "the agricultural world of field and pasture."

69. For an introduction to noble costume and its regulations, see Joachim Bumke, *Courtly Culture: Literature and Society in the High Middle Ages*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1991), 128–40. For hide-clothed wild men, see, for example, Carltidge, *Owl and the Nightingale*, where the Scottish "gop bitiȝt mid ruȝe velle" (go clad in rough pelts; 1013).

70. *Dialogues*, II, chapter 1, 7.

71. In addition to Vance, *Topic*, 61 n48, Alice Planche, "Les Taureaux et leur maître: sur un épisode discuté de l'*Yvain* de Chrétien de Troyes," *Pris-MA* 4 (1988): 13, also makes (but does not elaborate upon) this point: "on imagine les peaux non tannées, encores humides d'un sang qui accentue l'osmose entre le maître et les bêtes" (one imagines the skins not tanned, still damp with blood, which accentuates the osmosis between master and beasts). Planche also identifies the species of bulls the Herdsman masters—Aurochs; the exact size of the Herdsman's forehead; and finally suggests that he may be modeled after a Neanderthal.

72. This is, incidentally, not a peasant but a hunting weapon, a point I will treat at greater

de la Montagne and the two demons Yvain later fights use clubs. The only other characters in *Yvain* who fight without technological assistance are animals, Yvain's lion and its dragon opponent. Consequently, even though the Herdsman's violence is constitutively human, it is not *characteristically* human; his violence gives him dominion over and thus distinguishes him from his animals, but insofar as his mode of violence is itself "bestial," it simultaneously identifies him with those very animals.

It would be easy at this point to observe that the scene is yet another witness that only elite humans are fully human, that elites often characterized peasants as animals, or even, as Paul Freedman wisely notes, that in these encounters between elites and monstrous peasants, "images of humanity and animality were not fixed."⁷³ The scene may better be understood, however, as representing the human at both at its most primitive and most fundamental. In costume, technology, and appearance the Herdsman is the very paradigm of the bestial peasant, but when Calogrenant asks the Herdsman to direct him to a marvel (362–64), he acknowledges that the Herdsman has ceased to be a marvel and become a fellow human. He does so only after he is satisfied by the Herdsman's declaration of mastery over his animals. His recognition of the Herdsman as human, then, makes Calogrenant complicit in the Herdsman's violence. Calogrenant cannot emerge unscathed from this encounter. Inasmuch as he recognizes the Herdsman as human, he must admit how the human—and he himself—comes to be, that the acts by which humans distinguish themselves from animals identify them with animals all the more strongly. While Calogrenant recognizes that the Herdsman stands in, as Marie-Luce Chênerie remarks, a "cercle étroit d'une domination brutale"⁷⁴ (narrow circle of brutal domination), he must also recognize that if this domination is brutal, so is the human itself.

III.

Sympathy's Consolations

Any human encounter with an animal potentially confounds the human sense of difference, but in most medieval texts and practices, the challenge is only implicit. Humans normally appeal to tautologies to prove their dis-

length in a separate article.

73. Freedman, *Images of the Medieval Peasant*, 142.

74. Chênerie, *Chevalier errant*, 182,

inction from animals: humans know they are reasonable because they are not animals, and they know animals are not human because they are irrational. Monsters such as the cynocephali and Wild Herdsman break the tautological circuit—which, at any rate, never functions perfectly—since they require that humans explicitly consider the rules by which they claim the human for themselves. Annie Cazenave observed that since teratology really speaks about the human relation to the universe, understanding of the world, or fear of death or sex, “le discours sur le monstre est, en réalité, un discours sur l’homme” (the discourse on the monster is, in reality, a discourse on Man), a point to which Jacques Voisenet adds, “Sous cet aspect, le rôle du monstre ne se différencie en rien, sauf en intensité, de celui de n’importe quel animal”⁷⁵ (in this aspect, the role of the monster differs in nothing, except in intensity, from that of any given animal). True: it is not, however, that the discourse of monsters is, like that of animals, anthropocentric, but that teratology compels humans to confront the conditions of their humanity more intensely than does the confrontation with more quotidian beasts. Monsters compel humans to confront directly the “founding crime” of the human; to repurpose Žižek’s discussion of Israel’s “founding crime” as only more recent than that of other states, “what the [monster] confronts us with is merely the obliterated past of *every* [human] power.”⁷⁶ At the seam of a dog’s ravening head joined to a human body, in the “essars” where a Herdsman, his face a mass of animal shapes, beats his vainly protesting beasts, the human confronts the fact that there is nothing to them as human *except* this only ever partial emergence from the animal. Faced with this self-recognition, the human seeks to protect its sense of essential identity from its own constitutive violence. If that violence becomes someone else’s responsibility, then humans can reassure themselves that their own humanity is not founded through violence, that it is not founded at all, but simply is. Thus even while employing the subjugation of animals as his heuristic for humanity, Ratramnus deflects the violence onto the inherently unruly beasts, who require the “gentle” mastery of the cynocephali; Chrétien deflects violence onto both the Herdsman and his beasts and away from the knights, who instead learn to govern themselves through love, contracts, and the redirection of their own, murderous violence toward protecting the weak.

The deflection of violence against animals helps explain traditional warnings about the callousness and bloodthirstiness of humans accustomed to violence against animals. Plutarch urged, “If for no other reason than for

75. Cazenave quoted and replied to in Voisenet, *Bêtes et hommes*, 26.

76. Žižek, *Violence*, 117.

practice in kindness to our fellows we should accustom ourselves to being mild and gentle with animals,” and the third-century Neoplatonist Porphyry approvingly cites the maxim that “thieves and fighters do not come from eaters of barley-bread; but informers and tyrants come from meat-eaters.”⁷⁷ John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople (d. 407), in commenting on Proverbs 12:10, “The just man takes care of his beast, but the heart of the wicked is merciless,” allowed that while it might seem demeaning to care for animals, “he who has pity upon animals tends to have much more pity upon his brothers.”⁷⁸ In a commentary on Genesis 9:4, in which God allows humans to eat animals but forbids them to eat animal blood, the twelfth-century Parisian scholar Peter the Chanter warned that executioners and butchers posed a danger to the body politic, because they were more prone to shedding blood than other people were.⁷⁹ In his *Summa contra Gentiles*, Aquinas wrote:

Indeed, if any statements are found in Sacred Scripture prohibiting the commission of an act of cruelty against brute animals, for instance, that one should not kill a bird accompanied by her young, this is said . . . to turn the mind of man away from cruelty which might be used on other men, lest a person through practicing cruelty on brutes might go on to do the same to men.⁸⁰

Aquinas returns to this issue in his *Summa Theologica*, 1a2ae q. 102, a. 6, “Whether there was any reasonable cause for the ceremonial observances,” reply objection 8, which concerns the Mosaic Law’s Deuteronomic commands in light of Paul’s assertion that God takes no care for oxen. Here he

77. Robert McQueen Grant, *Early Christians and Animals* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 9. Sorabji, *Animal Minds*, 173, observes that Pythagoras is credited with first making this observation. For Porphyry, see Porphyry, *On Abstinence from Killing Animals*, 50.

78. John Wright, ed., *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon*, Ancient Christian Commentaries on Scripture: Old Testament 9 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 90–91.

79. Quoted in Philippe Buc, *L’Ambiguïté du Livre: prince, pouvoir, et peuple dans les commentaires de la Bible au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1994) 219 n37, from Paris, BN Arsenal 44, 19v, “Unde periculosum lictorum officium et carnificium, quia quadam usuali frequentia ad effundendum sanguinem fiunt pronoiores.” Buc translates “carnificium” as executioner, dangerous because he is accustomed to shedding “le sang humain” (human blood), but Peter’s commentary speaks only of blood in general: “carnificium” should therefore be understood, more straightforwardly, as “butcher.”

80. Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*, vol. 3, III.112.13, 119. Aquinas obscures this point with two additional explanations which rely on, respectively, a defense of property rights—the animal, like any possession, should not be harmed unnecessarily—and the Pauline exegesis on Deuteronomy 25:4, which I discuss in chapter 3.

reiterates the central point that humans need not be troubled by the suffering of animals, since “God has subjected all things to man’s power,” but then restates, at greater length, his explanation that human gentleness toward animals fosters gentleness toward other humans. This argument continued to have currency through the early modern era and persists into the present day: in Thomas More’s *Utopia*, “the slaughtering of livestock and cleaning of carcasses is done by slaves. They don’t let ordinary people get used to cutting up animals, because they think it tends to destroy one’s natural feelings of humanity”; in his *Lectures on Ethics*, Kant praised the English for forbidding butchers from jury duty, “because they are accustomed to the sight of death and hardened”; and in the 1980s, the butchers who spoke to Noëlie Vialles of their squeamishness about human blood were laboring under the weight of a tradition that regarded them as professionally inured to murder.⁸¹ While the warnings may be commended for curtailing human cruelty to animals as well as human cruelty to humans, and also for simply encouraging humans to acknowledge animal suffering, they should ultimately be understood as yet another strategy of the human. It is not only that none of the warnings worry that humans habituated to violence against animals might become great, indifferent killers of animals. It is also that the warnings also burden individual humans with personal responsibility for kindness to animals, while deflecting attention from any critique of the objective violence of the human itself.⁸² Among the warnings, only Plutarch and Porphyry’s

81. Thomas More, *Utopia*, trans. Paul Turner (New York: Penguin, 1961), 81; Kant quoted in Linzey and Clarke, *Animal Rights*, 127; Noëlie Vialles, *Animal to Edible*, trans. A. Underwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 78–79. For premodern and Early Modern warnings against animal cruelty that attended, not to the suffering animals, but to the dangers humans underwent by allowing their passions to become disordered, see Erica Fudge, “Two Ethics: Killing Animals in the Past and the Present,” in *Animal Studies Group, Killing Animals*, 99–119; for two medieval examples likely belonging to this tradition, see “Symon’s Lesson of Wyshedome for all Maner Chyldryn,” in Frederick James Furnivall, ed., *The Babees Book*, EETS o. s. 32 (London: N. Trübner & Co., 1868), and Frederick James Furnivall, ed., *Caxton’s Book of Curtesye*, EETS e. s. 3 (London: N. Trübner & Co., 1868), which, respectively, advise “Loke þou cast to no mannes dogge, / with staff ne stone at hors ne hogge” (23–24), and “cast not wyth stone or styke at foule ne beste, / And where ye walke be ware that ye ne rage” (64–65). Note, however, that Fudge observes that Early Modern thought was not monolithic: other thinkers, most notably Montaigne, did empathize with animal suffering itself.

82. I draw my inspiration from Mark Fisher, “. . . Without Any Consequences for the Individual Villains,” K-Punk, May 18, 2009, <http://k-punk.abstractdynamics.org/archives/011132.html>, where, while discussing the film *The Parallax View*, the recent banking crisis, and the police shooting in London of Jean Charles de Menezes, mistaken for a terrorist, Fisher writes, “we shouldn’t rush to impose the individual ethical responsibility that the corporate structure deflects. This is the temptation of the ethical which, as Žižek suggested at the Birkbeck Communism conference, the system is using in order to protect itself—the

treatises can be considered free of hypocrisy, for, being unencumbered by Christianity's insistence on the worldly singularity of humans, they can challenge the supposed naturalness of the human domination of other worldly beings and so undercut the human itself. Not one of the other thinkers questions or relinquishes human superiority.

Ratramnus's position is exemplary in its assurance that his leather-clad cynocephali can somehow eschew "feral," "bestial" violence while still subjecting animals to their commands. Meanwhile, under Ratramnus's leadership, ninth-century Corbie employed people to fatten swine, geese, and chickens for slaughter, kept three leather workers on its permanent staff, and collected tithes of rams, lambs, goats, suckling pigs, and bacon.⁸³ Corbie thrived, and Ratramnus too thrived, on the killing of domesticated animals. Without the wealth generated by the expropriation of animal lives, without parchment, made from the skins of animals, Ratramnus could not have enjoyed Corbie's famous library or have been able to research or write his letter on the cynocephali. To recall Benjamin's well-worn maxim, once we cease to empathize with Ratramnus and other human "victors," we recognize that his texts are quite explicitly at once documents of civilization and of barbarism. In this case, to "brush history against the grain" means to pay as much heed to the material of the manuscript itself as to the writing; to see the remnants of follicles on a parchment's hair side as an alternate punctus, a palimpsestic reminder of what the letters of human reason obscure; or indeed to see this skin, put to use, and not dissimilar to human skin, as a call to humans to put off the arrogance of burial, which, like the system of the human itself, attempts to preserve the individual, corporeal materials of human existence from its constitutive involvement in the world.⁸⁴ Ratramnus allowed himself to feel no such thing. Looking at the skin on which he wrote, imagining the hides on the backs of the cynocephali, he must have

blame will be put on supposedly pathological individuals, those 'abusing the system' (and then deflected onto other targets altogether) rather than the system itself."

83. See the summary of the statutes of Adalhard (issued 822) in David Ganz, *Corbie in the Carolingian Renaissance* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1990), 26–27.

84. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 256, "Without exception, the cultural treasures [the historical materialist] surveys have an origin which he cannot contemplate without horror. . . . There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism." Insofar as it is possible, I have tried in this book, as Benjamin urged, "to brush history against the grain." For further discussion about the "ethical complexity of mass animal slaughter for the purpose of literary production," with particular attention to the "baffling failure" of both modern scholarship and medieval writing to acknowledge the centrality of animal death to medieval textuality, see Holsinger, "Of Pigs and Parchment," 619–22. Mary Kate Hurley suggested to me the point about burial.

considered his writing and their clothing so “gentle” that he could confidently refer to violence as a particularly animal characteristic. Through his cynocephali, Ratramnus imagines a “gentle” mass slaughter of animals, as if the human were not being continually and imperfectly generated by its own systemic, “objective” violence. Needless to say, Ratramnus’s hope is false, self-serving in fact. As I argue in my epilogue, such an innocent humanity, if such a thing could ever be achieved, would require the complete abandonment of human and animal as two binary and hierarchical rather than multitudinous and overlapping categories. But by indulging in his fantasy of a gentle humanity, Ratramnus protects the equally fantastic notion of an essential human identity distinct from that of animals.

The concern about violence against animals of Ratramnus, Aquinas, and the rest should be likened to that of Wolfram von Eschenbach’s *Parzival*, whose hero weeps for the songbirds he himself has killed,⁸⁵ or to that of Francis of Assisi’s limited, often misunderstood solicitude for animals. Thomas of Celano describes Francis’s care for his fellow creatures, how he removed “from the road little worms, lest they be crushed under foot”;⁸⁶ but he also records how Francis replied to one of his fellows who asked whether meat should be eaten on a Christmas that happened to fall on Friday, a customary day of abstinence: “You sin, Brother, calling the day on which the Child was born to us a day of fast. It is my wish . . . that even the walls should eat meat on such a day, and if they cannot, they should be smeared with meat on the outside.”⁸⁷ This dubious sympathy for animals may also be likened to that of the thirteenth-century Dominican Ralph “Bocking”’s life of Richard de Wyche, thirteenth-century Abbot of Chichester, which includes this anecdote:

In tantum vero castrimargie vitium solebat condempnare quod cum agni vel edi seu pulli, ut assolent coquine, inferrentur, dicere solebat quasi mortem innocentum plagendo. “O,” inquit, “si rationales essetis et loqui possetis, quantum ventres nostros malediceretis. Nos quidem mortis vestre causa sumus; vos, qui innocentes estis, quid morte dignum commisistis?”

[Richard] used to condemn the sin of gluttony in such severe terms that

85. Wolfram von Eschenbach, *Parzival and Titarel*, trans. Cyril W. Edwards (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), Book III, 51. There is no such scene in Chrétien’s version, *Perlesvaus*, *Bliocadran*, or the Middle English *Sir Perceval of Galles*, although they all tend to present Perceval as a great hunter.

86. Thomas of Celano, *Second Life*, trans. Placid Hermann, chapter 124, section 165, in Habig, *St. Francis of Assisi*, 495.

87. Thomas of Celano, *Second Life*, chapter 151, section 199, in *ibid.*, 521–22.

when the cooks brought in lambs or kids or chickens, as they often did, he would cry out, as if mourning the death of the innocent, “O if you could reason and were able to speak, how you would curse our appetites! For in truth it is because of us that you died. You are the innocent ones; what have you done to deserve to die?”⁸⁸

As with Parzival and Francis, Richard’s sympathy goes only so far. Parzival, for all his sadness, remains a devotee of hunting, admired by Wolfram for his prowess in bringing down the stags of the Forest of Soltane; Francis, a devotee of holiday carnage, should be understood, as David Salter argues, not as an advocate for animals but as a restorer of the prelapsarian dominion of humans over the natural world;⁸⁹ and if Richard feels slightly ashamed of the injustice of human domination over animals, he does nothing to prevent the slaughter that sustains it. Instead, while continuing to oversee the routine deaths of animals, he offers them only the slightest acknowledgment that if

88. David Jones, ed., *Saint Richard of Chichester: The Sources for His Life* (Lewes: Sussex Record Society, 1995), 104; trans., 180. The name or toponym “Bocking” is a modern ascription found in neither of the life’s medieval manuscripts, which simply call the author of the life “Radulphus”: David Jones, “The Medieval Lives of Richard of Chichester,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 105 (1987): 106–12. For a more readily accessible, seventeenth-century edition from the same manuscript, see *Acta Sanctorum*, April 1, chapter III.31, 292. The anecdote often appears in histories of sympathy for animals: for example, Lewis Regenstein, *Replenish the Earth: A History of Organized Religions’ Treatment of Animals and Nature—Including the Bible’s Message of Conservation and Kindness toward Animals* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 65; Andrew Linzey, *Animal Theology* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 136; Rod Preece, *Awe for the Tiger, Love for the Lamb: A Chronicle of Sensibility to Animals* (London: Routledge, 2003), 81. Their source appears to be Ambrose Agius, *God’s Animals* (London: Catholic Study Circle for Animal Welfare, 1970), 53. However, Ralph includes the anecdote not as a sign of Richard’s kindheartedness, but of his asceticism, one in a list of his several monastic virtues. By omitting the anecdote’s opening clause, Agius missed this point, as did later citations, which apparently quoted directly from Agius without consulting the original life. Read with the opening clause, the anecdote implies that if it were possible to kill and consume animals without circumventing vows of asceticism, nothing would impede their deaths.

89. Salter, *Holy and Noble Beasts*, 32, which encapsulates his argument that “instead of instituting ‘a democracy of God’s creatures,’ Francis was thought to have reasserted humanity’s original authority over the animal kingdom—a return to the state of primal innocence that caused the wolf to abandon his wild and savage behaviour, and adopt a life of dutiful obedience.” This argument is as applicable, for example, to the account of Edith and her menagerie in Goscelin’s *Life of Edith* (trans. Michael Wright and Kathleen Locar), in Stephanie Hollis, ed., *Writing the Wilton Women: Goscelin’s Legend of Edith and Liber confortatorius* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 41–42, which despite deploying a number of verses to praise care of animals (e.g., Psalm 144:9 and 16, “The Lord is sweet to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. . . . Thou openest thy hand, and fillest with blessing every living creature”), concludes by stressing that Edith could calm the fiercest beasts: holy domination rather than generosity is finally the point.

they were rational, if they could speak, he might hear their complaints—but he makes no promise that he would act on them.

For Parzival, Richard, and the medieval Christian tradition more generally, no doctrine permitted any direct concern for animal lives. Social practices that seemed to value animals over humans, as in laws against poaching, were meant not to protect animals, but only to protect the privilege of certain dominant humans to kill them. Within this system, calls for sympathy toward animals urged changes only in the behavior of individuals, and therefore atrophied any possibility of systemic change; ultimately they protected not only human ascendancy, but also the good conscience of humans occupying that position.⁹⁰ Such incidental acts of kindness to animals allowed humans to believe themselves rational rather than brutal without giving up the prerogatives of the human; they allowed humans to profit from the constitutive violence of the human while screening their complicity in it; they allowed humans to cultivate their beautiful souls, amid a slaughter for which they were responsible, encouraging them, allowing them, to do no more than weep.

IV.

The Good Conscience of a Sheep: Prudentius's "Ante Cibus"

I conclude the chapter by turning from the limit cases of teratology and the self-serving uses of sympathy to a 205-line poem, "Ante Cibus" (Before the Meal; written between 402 and 404),⁹¹ the third hymn in the *Cathemerinon*

90. I am inspired to these critiques by the critique of charity work by leading capitalists, whom he derides as "liberal communists," in Žižek, *Violence*, e.g., 22, "In liberal communist ethics, the ruthless pursuit of profit is counteracted by charity. Charity is the humanitarian mask hiding the face of economic exploitation. In a superego blackmail of gigantic proportions, the developed countries 'help' the undeveloped with aid, credits, and so on, and thereby avoid the key issue, namely their complicity in and co-responsibility for the miserable situation of the undeveloped." My use of "good conscience" echoes Derrida's many scornful uses of this phrase; for example, Jacques Derrida, *Aporias*, trans. Thomas Dutoit (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 19, "How to justify the choice of negative form (*aporia*) to designate a duty that, through the impossible or impracticable, nonetheless announces itself in an affirmative fashion? Because one must avoid good conscience at all costs. Not only good conscience as the grimace of an indulgent vulgarity, but quite simply the assured form of self-consciousness: good conscience as subjective certainty is incompatible with the absolute risk that every promise, every engagement, and every responsible decision—if there are such—must run."

91. I thank Patricia Dailey for bringing this work to my attention. For a comprehensive commentary attending particularly to its echoes of other works, patristic and classical, see

of the Iberian Christian poet Prudentius. Prudentius was enormously important for medieval Christianity, both for his famous *Psychomachia*, in which the virtues and vices struggle for victory over a human soul, and for the *Cathemerinon*, whose hymns, along with those of his *Peristephanon*, served as raw material for forming liturgies.⁹² The articulations of belief in “Ante Cibum”—on Creation, the Fall, the Virgin Birth, Incarnation, Redemption, and Resurrection—are so typical of what would become medieval Christianity as to constitute in their aggregate a kind of Credo. For all these reasons, but especially because of the unquestioned human status of the ascetic subjects of “Ante Cibum” in comparison to Ratramnus’s cynocephali or Chrétien’s Herdsman, the hymn exemplifies the dynamics I have tracked in this chapter under what might be understood as another marginal case, this concerning not humans who were too bestial but rather those who, as ascetics, avoided some key tasks of animal domination. The most pressing problem for ascetics is a fundamental necessity of life itself, namely eating. “Ante Cibum” therefore considers several kinds of food, including olives, bread, and wine, but is dominated by questions of the proper ascetic relation to the slaughter of animals. Drawing idiosyncratically on ascetic traditions, Prudentius concocts answers that can be understood as either profoundly sophisticated or profoundly contradictory: “Ante Cibum” initially praises God for granting humans complete domination over the natural world, but then limits humans from consuming any meat but that of fish or fowl. Then, after condemning the slaughter of livestock, the hymn finally portrays Satan and his minions as wolves, lions, eagles, and tigers, and Jesus and Christians in general as doves and sheep. Carnivorousness, at first a God-given sign of human superiority, has become by the end of the hymn, in at least some instances, infernal.

In the first thirty-five lines the hymn requests that Christ attend the impending communal meal of the ascetics; then it invokes a muse, whom

Maria Becker, *Kommentar zum Tischgebet des Prudentius (cath. 3)* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2006). Jean-Louis Charlet, *La Création poétique dans le Cathemerinon de Prudence* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1982), 194, tentatively dates it on the basis of its metrical similarity to other Prudentian poems whose dates are better known. For a discussion of the work that focuses on its rhetorical, structural, and stylistic features and its classical allusions, see Willy Evenepoel, “Prudentius’ Hymnus ante cibum (cath. 3),” *Maia* 35 (1983): 125–35. In his conclusion, Evenepoel briefly notes the combination of “thanks and praise and joy” for God’s benefits accompanied by an “uneasy threat of moral anxiety,” and so suggests my reading of the hymn.

92. On Prudentius’s works in the Middle Ages, see Sinéad O’Sullivan, *Early Medieval Glosses on Prudentius’ Psychomachia: The Weitz Tradition* (Brill: Leiden, 2004), 1–21. O’Sullivan, 5, calls him “by all accounts the most important Latin Christian poet of Late Antiquity.” For the considerable popularity of “Ante Cibum,” see Prudentius, *Carmina*, ed. Maurice P. Cunningham, CCSL 126 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1966), xxi.

Prudentius commands to abandon profane poetry for the sacred mysteries. Having set the stage, Prudentius, in the next twenty-two lines, characterizes the Creator and his gifts:

Ipse homini quia cuncta dedit,
 quae capimus dominante manu,
 quae polus aut humus aut pelagus
 Aëre gurgite rure creant,
 haec mihi subdidit et sibi me.
 Callidus inlaqueat uolucres
 aut pedicis dolus aut maculis,
 inlita glutine corticeo
 uimina plumigeram seriem
 inpediunt et abire uetant.
 Ecce per aequora fluctuagos
 texta greges sinuosa trahunt,
 piscis item sequitur calamum
 raptus acumine uulnifico,
 credula saucius ora cibo.
 Fundit opes ager ingenuas
 diues aristiferae segetis,
 hic ubi uitea pampineo
 bracchia palmitum luxuriant,
 pacis alumna ubi baca uiret.
 Haec opulentia christicolis
 seruit et omnia subpeditat. (36–57)

God gave all things to mankind, which we take with a sovereign hand; that which the sky, earth, or sea creates in the air, ocean, or fields, these he subdued to me, and me to him. Cunning craft entangles birds in a snare, net, or twigs smeared with bark-glue; it stops a line of feather-bearers in a row and forbids them to go. Lo, through wavy water sinuous nets trap the herds; thus is the fishing pole followed by the fish, seized by the wound-making hook, its mouth wounded, trusting in food. The field flows with natural works in the riches of the grain crop; here where branches covered with vines and foliage grow luxuriously, and the berry, the nursling of peace [the olive], flourishes. All this opulence serves Christians and supplies their every need.⁹³

93. Latin from Prudentius, *Carmina*. Prudentius, *Works*, trans. H. J. Thomson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949) guides my translation.

Prudentius begins with the technologies of dominating and killing animals and only afterwards turns to edible plants, treating plant food with far more brevity. Moreover, although grain, grapes, and olives are the emblematic fruits of agriculture, Prudentius does not speak of the human agency necessary for their production; instead, the plants seem to spontaneously spring from the earth's innate luxury. That Prudentius discusses animals first, gives them the most sustained attention, and praises the human agency required to kill them, while omitting the agency required for agriculture, suggests that animals are God's chief alimentary gift to humans, the food "we take with a sovereign hand," whose consumption best represents humans' worldly dominion and their specialness to God.

However, although Prudentius approves the consumption of the birds of the "aëre" and the fish of the "gurgite," he forbids Christians, whom he characterizes as masters of farms (39–40), to eat the animals of the "rure":

absit enim procul illa fames,
 caedibus ut pecudum libeat
 sanguineas lacerare dapes.
 Sint fera gentibus indomitis
 prandia de nece quadrupedum;
 nos holeris coma, nos siliqua
 feta legumine multimodo
 paverit innocuis epulis.
 Spumea mulctra gerunt niveos
 ubere de gemino latices,
 perque coagula densa liquor
 in solidum coit, et fragili
 lac tenereum premitur calatho. (57–70)

Far be from us the appetite pleased to slay cattle and to hack them for bloody feasts. Let fierce meals of the killing [or "murder"] of four-footed creatures be for unruly peoples; for us, the salad green, for us the pod full of many kinds of beans, that feeds us with a harmless feast. Foaming pails bear the snow-white milk drawn from a pair of teats; and by means of thickening rennet the liquor solidifies, and the soft curd is pressed in a frail wicker basket.

Prudentius imagines the farm as a place where farmers raise livestock (*pecores*) for milk and cheese, but he elides the production of meat from animals such as pigs, which are raised only to be eaten, and also from working and dairy animals, which are customarily eaten when they can no longer

be of any other use. Prudentius instead tropes the eating of livestock as *fera*, that is, as proper to wild beasts. He implicitly warns Christians that if they eat their own animals they risk being aligned with or even transformed into the bestial enemies of their own agrarian demesne, but not, however, before he has praised the human domination of the world and, in particular, the human consumption of the wild animals of the sea and air.

Though Prudentius was a career civil servant rather than professionally religious, “Ante Cibum” has certain features in common with other Christian ascetic guides.⁹⁴ While Iberian and Gallic monastic rules from Prudentius’s own day, such as the *Codex regularum* (PL 103: 423B–428B) and the *Regula Orientalis* (PL 103: 477B–484B), specify ways and times of eating but do not specify what foods should or should not be eaten, Prudentius’s rejection of the flesh of quadrupeds and enthusiasm for the meat of fish and fowl could be understood as anticipating the restrictions of later monastic rules, or as promoting practices that the later rules would codify. Some sixth-century rules, such as Caesarius of Arles’s *Regula ad Virgines* and Aurelian of Arles’s *Regula ad Monachos*, forbade all meat to their communities, allowing fish for certain holidays and fowl for the sick (see, respectively, PL 67: 1120B–C and PL 68: 388D). The thirty-ninth chapter of the Rule of Benedict, also written in the sixth century, demanded that all monks abstain from the flesh of quadrupeds, but, by debatably allowing the sick to eat birds, was somewhat laxer than other rules. The fifth chapter of the rule of the seventh-century Iberian Archbishop Fructuosus of Braga forbids meat, allows fowl to the sick, and punishes monks who violate these strictures by confining them to a diet “solis oleribus, et leguminibus, raroque pisciculis fluvialibus, vel marinis” (PL 87:1102C; only of vegetables and beans, and rarely freshwater or saltwater fish).⁹⁵ But Prudentius, after proscribing certain forms of meat-eating, does not resume his praise of the consumption of wild birds and fish, nor does he try to reestablish the modes of human dominance he has now characterized—at least in part—as sinful, and, more to the point, feral. Rather, in the subsequent lines he praises a diet of “harmless” greens, milk, honey, and apples (66–80) characteristic of the classical Golden Age, philosophic otherworldliness, and stricter Christian asceticisms, such as that

94. For Prudentius’s life and career, see Anne-Marie Palmer, *Prudentius on the Martyrs* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 20–31. For further historical context of Prudentius’s Iberian career and his sojourns in Italy, see Martha A. Malamud, *A Poetics of Transformation: Prudentius and Classical Mythology* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 13–26.

95. For discussions and translations (into French) of early Monastic rules, see Vincent Desprez, trans., *Règles monastiques d’Occident, IVe–VIe siècle, d’Augustin à Ferreol* (Begrolles-en-mauges: Abbaye de Belle Fontaine, 1980).

promoted by Ambrose's *Hexameron*, in which Ambrose argues that "we ought to be content to live on simple herbs, on cheap vegetables and fruits such as nature has presented to us and the generosity of God has offered to us,"⁹⁶ or Jerome, who, in a letter to Marcellus, contrasted Roman eating—at once too delicate and too sensually animal—to the philosophical rigor supported by a sparse rural diet: "Tibi cibarius panis, et olus nostris manibus irrigatum, et lac deliciae rusticanae, viles quidem, sed innocentes cibos praebent" (There such country dainties as milk and household bread, and greens watered by our own hands, will supply us with coarse but harmless fare).⁹⁷ Prudentius's revised diet may thus seem to recall the simple "innocentes cibos" of wilderness ascetics or to resuscitate the vegetarian paradises of the classical Golden Age or the Christian prelapsarian existence—or it would have, had "Ante Cibum" not already imagined a fundamentally antagonistic human relationship to at least some animals.

After setting out alimentary rules that praise at least some meat-eating before promoting a vegetarian diet, "Ante Cibum" concludes by articulating the orthodox position on the resurrection of the body, "viscera mortua . . . post obitum reparare datur" (it is granted to dead flesh [or "internal organs"] to be renewed after death; 191–92). The structure suggests another explanatory context for the poem, namely mainstream Christian negotiations between orthodox asceticism and heresies that reject rather than tame the body. Prior to the composition of "Ante Cibum," the precepts of the early-fourth-century Council of Ancyra (now Ankara), which largely concerned the readmission of lapsed Christians into the church, had begun to appear in Latin translation. The Council's fourteenth canon provides an instance of Christian deliberation analogous to that in "Ante Cibum":

Qui in clero sunt praesbyteri vel hii qui ministraverunt, et abstinent a carnibus, hoc placuit ut eas contingant quidem et si voluerint ab hic comedendis abstineant. Quo si in tantum eas abominabiles iudicauerint ut nec olera quae cum carnibus cocuntur existiment commedenda, tamquam non subditi huic regulae, cessabunt a ministerio ordinis sint.⁹⁸

96. Ambrose, *Hexameron*, III.vii.28, 88.

97. Jerome, Letter 43, quoted from an eighteenth-century commentary to "Ante Cibum" by Faustinus Arevalus, conveniently reprinted in *PL* 59: 801B. Translation from Jerome, *Letters and Select Works*, trans. W. H. Fremantle, with G. Lewis and W. G. Martley, vol. 6, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers 2 (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1892).

98. Cuthbert Turner, ed., *Ecclesiae Occidentalis Monumenta Iuris Antiquissima: Canonum et Conciliorum Graecorum Interpretationes Latinae* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1907), vol. 1, part I, 86s, from the "Isidori antiqua" version, Canon XXXIII here, but XIV in the original. For the afterlife of the council's canons, see John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and*

Those who are in clerical orders or priests or serve the church, and abstain from meat should at least taste of it and then, if they wish, they may abstain from eating it. If they judge this to be so abhorrent that they decide not to eat vegetables cooked with meat, inasmuch as they have not obeyed the rule, expel them from their office in which they were ordained.

Religious professionals could not eat an entirely meatless diet without exciting charges of Dualism. Dualists accounted for the corruption and evil of the world by believing in two creators: one responsible only for the incorruptible, unchanging world of spirit, and one responsible for the material world with all its ills. They revered the former and rejected the latter; many showed their contempt for the world and its master by rejecting both sex and meat-eating.⁹⁹ A fourth-century Iberian bishop of Avila, Priscillian, and his followers were accused of this heresy, by, among others, the First Council of Toledo, held in 400, whose seventeenth canon assails the Priscillianists for avoiding meat for the wrong reasons. It reads:

Si quis dixerit vel crediderit carnes avium seu pecodum [*sic*], quae ad escam datae sunt, non tantum pro castigatione corporum abstinendas, sed execrandas esse, anathema sit.¹⁰⁰

Anyone who says or believes that the flesh of birds or livestock, which are given for eating, should be abstained from not only for the castigation of the body, but because it is detested, let him be anathema.

For the purposes of my argument, the truth of the charge of Dualism against the Priscillianists does not matter, nor does it matter that the canon itself may be a mid-fifth-century interpolation;¹⁰¹ what matters is that contempo-

Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 178–79, n33. For another articulation of this rule, see the fourteenth canon of the First Council of Braga, which took place in 561, specifically singling out Manichaeans and Priscillianists: “Si quis immundos putat cibos carnum, quos Deus in usus hominum dedit, et non propter afflictionem corporis sui, sed quasi immunditiam putans ita ab eis absteineat, ut nec olera cocta cum carnibus prae-gustet, sicut Manichaeus et Priscillianus dixerunt, anathema sit” (PL 84: 564B–C).

99. Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, eds., *Heresies of the High Middle Ages: Selected Sources, Translated and Annotated* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 9–19, efficiently treats dualist faiths in relation to Christianity.

100. José Vives, ed., *Concilios Visigóticos e Hispano-Romanos* (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto Enrique Flórez, 1963), 28.

101. See Alberto Ferreiro, “*De prohibitione carnis*. Meat Abstention and the Priscillianists,” *Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum* 11 (2007): 464–78.

raries of the “heresy,” such as Augustine, believed in the charge, or chose to believe in the belief of the charge. They may have believed in it for political advantage or perhaps to solidify orthodox ascetic practices at a key moment of doctrinal and ritual development; but this too is evidence that questions of proper asceticism were important in early-fifth-century Iberia, and that “Ante Cibus” may be understood as one of the texts engaging—perhaps unfairly—with Priscillianism. To distinguish Christian asceticism from heresy, and no doubt to establish a category of heresy, the Council of Ancyra and the community of the faithful it represented required the death of animals; the first Council of Toledo mitigated the rule but required that good Christians understand the avoidance of meat as abstention not from something repulsive but from something desirable. Likewise, the *Cathemerinon*’s frequent promotion of asceticism stresses that “vorandi . . . libidinem” (*Cathemerinon* VII, “Hymnus Ieiunantium,” “Hymn of Fasting,” 199; *the pleasure* of eating; my emphasis) should be avoided by free choice to mortify the body and its desires, not, then, as something disgusting to be avoided by all good people. Like the Council of Ancyra’s dietary legislation and the First Council of Toledo’s dictum on heretical vegetarianism, “Ante Cibus” lauds the killing and eating of animals before praising a Christian meatless diet. Like these other works, “Ante Cibus,” before recommending an ascetic diet, must first must display a willingness to kill and consume (some) animals, and, countering the antimaterialist eschatology of the Dualists, must then go on to stress its expectation of a bodily resurrection.

To identify—admittedly rather imaginatively—this canon and other related laws as structurally analogous to “Ante Cibus” provides additional context for understanding Prudentius’s combined praise and hesitation over full practice of the domination of animals. The poem’s conclusion, however, still remains, which cannot be accounted for by the context of negotiations with heresy. Here Prudentius describes the world of Christ’s new dispensation:

Quae feritas modo non trepidat
 territa de grege candidulo?
 Inpavidas lupus inter oves
 tristis obambulat et rabidum
 sanguinas inmemor os cohibet.
 Agnus enim vice mirifica
 ecce leonibus imperitat,
 exagitansque truces aquilas
 per vaga nubila perque Notos
 sidere lapsa columba fugat.

Tu mihi, Christe, columba potens
 sanguine pasta cui cedit avis,
 tu niveus per ovile tuum
 agnus hiare lupum prohibes,
 subiuga tigridis ora premens. (155–70)

What wild beast does not now tremble, terrified by the gleaming flock?
 The sad wolf walks among the fearless sheep and, forgetful, curbs his wild,
 bloody mouth. Behold, by a wonderful change, the lamb commands lions,
 and, gliding down through the roving clouds, the harrying dove routs fierce
 eagles. Christ, you are to me that potent dove to which the blood-fed bird
 submits; you are the snowy lamb who forbids the wolf to gape over your
 sheepfold; you subjugate and close the tiger's mouth.

In this passage, Prudentius further proscribes the consumption of *pecores* by identifying Christ as, so to speak, the *pecus pecorum*. The traditional image of sheep representing both Church and Christ here identifies both with the *rus*. Opposing the Christians, once again, are feral carnivores. Prudentius repeats the hymn's central quandary: meat-eating is an exercise of the rights that God granted to humans *as* humans, but in "Ante Cibus," Christian eaters who subjugate and consume domestic animals symbolically and paradoxically become the Satanic enemies of their own faith. Having forbidden the unconstrained eating of animals, Prudentius does not abandon human mastery; rather, he presents his Christians, members of the *gregus candidulus*, as bloodlessly terrifying wolves, lions, eagles, animals that numbered among the most potent carnivores. Though the *gregus* effects its mastery without the bestial savagery of the devil and his minions, Prudentius's military language describes what is, if anything, a more certain domination by a "columba potens" (powerful dove) and a flock that "imperitat" (commands) lions. As with the "gentleness" of Ratramnus's cynocephali, the total assurance of command preserves the human both by ensuring its complete domination of animals and by deferring the responsibility for the violence of domination onto the subjugated beasts.

Prudentius's complicated advocacy for asceticism in "Ante Cibus" diverges sharply from typical early Christian arguments for avoiding meat and in fact from his own arguments in his "Hymn of Fasting." These cautioned against the lust that certain meats inspired; or separated the dietary needs of Christian ascetics from those people, whether Christian or not, who served in worldly professions; or promoted training the body to serve the spirit by depriving it of the pleasures of meat; or called for a resumption of the vegetarian diet of the Edenic paradise; Augustine's one dietary

rule was that food, of whatever sort, should be eaten in moderation while charitably keeping in mind the spiritual well-being of one's fellow Christians.¹⁰² Although Prudentius's imperative in "Ante Cibus," "absit enim procul illa fames" (and let these hungers be far from us), may recall the phrase "procul sint a conviviis tuis Phasides aves" (and let pheasants be far from your banquets) from Jerome's seventy-ninth letter, Jerome's ascetic program differs radically from that of "Ante Cibus."¹⁰³ A typical passage from Jerome's letter is, "Let those feed on flesh who serve the flesh, whose bodies boil with desire, who are tied to husbands, and who set their hearts on having offspring"; by contrast, because Prudentius confronts in "Ante Cibus" not only the question of proper asceticism but, in considering the human domination of animals, that of the human itself, Prudentius speaks not of self-control, not of lusts, but of avoiding the horror of the violence of a human appetite. But even after he has expressed his horror at the savagery over animals necessary to human supremacy, he retreats from his own condemnation of human violence, blaming *gentes indomitas*, untamed peoples, and feral beasts for committing the worst violence against animals—without, however, ever repudiating his initial enthusiasm for killing and eating fish and birds. Like Ratramnus, like Chrétien, Prudentius insulates himself from the implications of being human. Imagining themselves surrounded by the bloody appetites of a savage and animal world, Prudentius's farmers stand serene and innocent, their human supremacy and ravening appetites cloaked in sheep's clothing.

102. For the development of Christian dietary asceticism, see Gillian Feeley-Harnik, *The Lord's Table; Grimm, Attitudes to Food in Late Antiquity* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994); and Teresa M. Shaw, *The Burden of the Flesh: Fasting and Sexuality in Early Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998). Porphyry, *On Abstinence from Killing Animals*, compiles the whole range of justifications for dietary asceticism pertinent to his coterie of late-antique Neoplatonists except—given his polemical anti-Christianism—those that specifically have to do with Christianity. For a revision of the longstanding opposition between feasting and fasting in early Christianity, see Effros, *Creating Community with Food and Drink*, especially 31, where she observes that although the "ascetic champions" of the stories of the fasting desert fathers "were viewed with wonder and had earned a reputation for performing healing miracles, they were not often promoted as models for early medieval clerics to imitate due to their rejection of the company of their brethren even at meals." Prudentius accords with Effros's model in his praise of eating in general and of *epula* in general, which were, as feasts, public and communal by definition.

103. I thank Becker, *Kommentar zum Tischgebet des Prudentius* (cath. 3), 108, for calling my attention to this echo.

CHAPTER 5



PIGS, BUTCHERS, AND THE ENDS OF HUMANITY

Hungry hog'll eat almost anything. . . . All over the world, hog and human take each other's measure. It is a delicate alliance, as your folks would have attested.

—Jane Smiley, *Moo*, 49

When a reporter's hand was placed against the robot's taste sensor, it was identified as prosciutto. A cameraman was mistaken for bacon.

—Eric Talmadge, "Researchers Unveil 'Winebot': Mechanical Sommelier Can Identify Dozens of Different Wines and Cheeses," *MSNBC*, September 1, 2006

I.

Dirty Pigs

For the period and places I consider in this book, meat was only a secondary product of most domesticated animals. Cows provided milk, oxen and horses labor, chickens eggs, and sheep wool; other animals—dogs and cats—provided companionship as well as more practical benefits, and in usual circumstances provided humans no meat at all. But their lives were still not their own. Humans would kill and eat a cow or chicken when it could no longer produce milk or eggs; cats might be skinned for their fur; people might even kill and eat the animals they loved, as starving knights sometimes did their horses.¹ Yet until the moment when the

1. For examples of crisis hippophagy, see Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075–1225*, 667. For cat-skinning, see Jones, "Cats and Cat-Skinning in Late Medieval Art and Life," 104–9; and Thomas, "Perceptions Versus Reality: Changing Attitudes towards Pets in Medieval and Post-Medieval England," in Pluskowski, *Just Skin and*

human killed and ate (or skinned) one of these animals, the relationship between them may have seemed to be characterized less by violence than by mutual dependence and even affection, though, of course, the human always remained in a position to unilaterally determine what to do with animals. By contrast, the violence of the relationship between humans and domesticated pigs was undisguised, since humans kept pigs *only* to kill and eat them. One of the multitude of lyrics by Eustache Deschamps, a late medieval French poet, describes the celebrations that follow a pig's slaughter, how the pieces are shared out among neighbors, and also how pigs are agents of disorder and destruction that "tout gastent et font tant d'annoy"² (lay waste to everything and do harm to all; 13); its refrain, "Pourcel ne fist bien en sa vie" (a pig does no good in its life), might be paraphrased as "the only good pig is a dead pig." This poem accords with the medieval archaeological record, in which pigs appear primarily as young animals, indicating that they were slaughtered as soon as they could yield sufficient meat.³ As the porcine telos witnesses to the human-animal relationship at its most primordial, pigs can be thought to number among the most animal of animals.

Pigs are still more emphatically animal because of another peculiar trait, namely that more than any other animal, they resisted being put in their place. They were at once domestic and wild, at once the most humiliated by human violence and among the most dangerous. The *Opus Synonymorum* of the thirteenth-century grammarian John of Garland sorts pigs on the basis of gender and age rather than domesticity, as if there were no significant differences between wild and domestic varieties.⁴ The chanson de geste *Aubery*

Bones?, 98–99. For cows and sheep used primarily for uses other than meat, see Albarella, "The Mystery of Husbandry," 868 and 870; and Christopher Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages: Social Change in England, c. 1200–1520* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 156.

2. Eustache Deschamps, *Oeuvres complètes de Eustache Deschamps*, ed. Auguste Queux de Saint-Hilaire and Gaston Raynaud, vol. 9 (Paris: Firmin Didot & Co., 1878), Balade 1236.

3. Ann Hagan, *A Second Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Food and Drink: Production and Distribution* (Hockwold-cum-Wilton, Norfolk: Anglo-Saxon Books, 1995), 115–17; Raymond Laurans, "L'élevage du porc à l'époque médiévale," in *L'homme et animal* (Paris: Institut international d'ethnoscience, 1975), 523 and 532. For the later period, see Dyer, *Standards of Living*, 156.

4. PL 150: 1579B: "Porcus, aper, verres, mas est; sus, porcaque, scropha; / Femina; sed sucula, porcellus, diminutivum; / Sus, suis. Ex illo caro debet esse suilla." John, who studied in Oxford and taught in Paris until c. 1272, wrote, in addition to several lexicographical works, a commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the *Stella Maris*, a poetic compendium of frequently antisemitic Marian miracles. For the great popularity of the *Opus Synonymorum*, see Geoffrey L. Bursill-Hall, "Johannes Garlandia: Forgotten Grammarian and the

le Bourgoing calls the great white boar its hero hunts both “sengler” and “porc,” and *Garin le Loherin* calls the boar killed by Bègue “sengler” (e.g., 10189) and “vers” (10158) or, using language seemingly more appropriate for a domestic pig, “pors” or “porc” (e.g., 10289).⁵ The romance *The Avowyng of Arthur*, which I discuss in detail below, generally calls the animal Arthur hunts a “bore” (e.g., 72) but also refers to it as “sqwyne” (swine; 229) and “gryse” (pig; 32), likewise words more commonly used to describe domestic pigs.⁶ The indistinction between the two kinds of swine occurs even in works of natural history, a genre that might be expected to make clearer distinctions than chivalric narrative in its classifications of animals. Hildegard of Bingen’s *Physica* declares that the “silvester porcus eamdem naturam habet” (the wild pig has the same nature [as the domestic pig]; *PL* 197: 1325D). John Trevisa’s Middle English translation of Bartholomew the Englishman’s *De Proprietatibus rerum* muddles the taxonomic breaks between wild and domestic pigs through cross-referencing: the section “De porco” directs its reader to find more information on the subject under “apro” and “sue” [sow], and “De sue” closes the taxonomic circle by directing its readers to “Loke oþere propretees byfore in litera p de porco et in litera a de apro” (for other properties of the pig, look under letter p, *de porco* [pig] and letter a, *de apro* [wild boar]).⁷ The terminology suggests that the domestic

Manuscript Tradition,” *Historiographia linguistica* 3 (1976): 170.

5. Prosper Tarbé, ed., *Le roman d’Aubery le Bourgoing* (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1974), 51–56; Josephine Elvira Vallerie, ed., *Garin le Loherin* (New York: Columbia University, 1947).

6. Thomas Hahn, ed., *Sir Gawain: Eleven Romances and Tales* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1995).

7. John Trevisa, *On the Properties of Things: John Trevisa’s Translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus’ De proprietatibus rerum*, ed. M. C. Seymour (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 18.7, 1120. See also Wilfried Schouwink, “The Sow Salaura and her Relatives in Medieval Literature and Art,” in *Epopée animale, fable, fabliau: actes du IVe Colloque de la Société internationale renardienne, Evreux, 7–11 septembre 1981*, ed. Gabriel Bianciotto and Michel Salvat (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1984), 512, which observes that in neither medieval natural history nor exegesis was the distinction between wild and domestic pigs firm, e.g., “Augustine’s commentary on the 79th Psalm and several 12th-century texts even indicate that the distinction *sus-aper* was not as strict as the early encyclopedias suggest.” But see Milo Kearney, *The Role of Swine Symbolism in Medieval Culture: blanc sanglier* (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 1991). This book, whimsically illustrated by the author, constructs a straightforward argument: for both the pre-Christian Celts and the Germanic peoples the wild boar and the pig represented fertility and the divinities associated with that trait. Under assault, at first from the decadence of Roman dietary excess after the Augustan age, then from the Christian church’s disapproval of corporeal delight and fertility, and finally from the refinements brought about by courtly love, the star of the swine, once an admired beast, sank further and further until it was held to be utterly contemptible. Kearney is prone to startling asides, such as his observation, at 103, that “Geographic environment tends to shape human

pig never quite lost its wildness, while the wild pig, for all its fierceness, has much in common with its degraded domestic cousins. Confusion between or conflation of the two types of swine is understandable on at least a morphological level. Iconography and archeology indicate that prior to the early sixteenth century, and, at the latest, prior to the introduction of the smooth, pink Chinese pig to Western pork husbandry in the eighteenth century, the wild and domestic pigs of Europe were all dark, bristly, tusked, arc-backed, and long-legged, in sum, nearly indistinguishable from each other.⁸ Neither did animal husbandry make a firm distinction: for much of the Middle Ages, domestic pigs led quasi-feral lives for most of the year, wandering the woods and eating the same foods as wild pigs, until winter forced them into shelter provided by their human masters;⁹ no doubt during this time domestic pigs interbred with their wild varieties, further compounding their uncultivated appearance.¹⁰ Pigs also wandered the streets of London and Paris, enjoy-

and animal species similarly; the curly-haired Neapolitan pigs mirrored their masters as much as the white-skinned pigs of Britain did theirs." A more restrained assessment can be found in Michel Pastoureau's early work on the pig, for example, "Histoire d'une mort infâme: le fils du roi de France tué un cochon (1131)," *Bulletin de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France* (1992): 175, where he asserts that "la frontière symbolique . . . est imperméable" (the symbolic frontier . . . is impermeable) between the two kinds of pigs, and also *Couleurs, images, symboles: études d'histoire et d'anthropologie* (Paris: Léopard d'or, 1989), 251. "Dans sa soue, le cochon est un animal stupide et impur; au cœur de la forêt, il entre en contact avec le monde sacré des arbres, spécialement avec le roi des arbres dont il mange les fruits: le chêne" (in its sty, the pig is a stupid and unclean animal; in the heart of the forest, it enters into contact with the sacred world of trees, especially with the king of trees, whose nuts it eats: the oak). Pastoureau's more recent work on the pig admits more ambiguities.

8. My research, conducted primarily through the examination of several hundred medieval images of swine available through Princeton's online Index of Christian Art at <http://ica.princeton.edu/> has confirmed the remark in Beryl Rowland, *Blind Beasts: Chaucer's Animal World* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1971), 77, on the iconographic indistinguishability between domestic and wild swine. By the end of the Middle Ages, visual depictions had just started to show the domestic pig without hair, arched back, or tusks; see Laurans, "L'élevage du porc," 525–26; Perrine Mane, "'Toujours pourceaux paîtront glands' ou l'élevage du porc a travers l'iconographie médiévale," in *Život v archeologii středověku / Life in the Archaeology of the Middle Ages*, ed. Jana Kubková, Jan Klápště, and Martin Ježek (Prague: Peres, 1997), 439–40. On the hairiness of British pigs until at least the sixteenth century, see Hagan, *Food and Drink*, 102. Wilson G. Pond and Harry J. Mersmann, eds., *Biology of the Domestic Pig* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 9, accords with Pastoureau, *Couleurs, images, symboles*, 238: "Par rapport au cochon domestique, le sanglier a une tête plus allongée, des oreilles plus courtes, des défenses et des canines plus développées, des soies plus grosses et plus raides" (Compared with the domestic pig, the wild boar has a more elongated head, shorter ears, more developed tusks and teeth, and heavier and coarser bristles). Notably, the only distinction Pastoureau discovers between the wild and domestic pig, even after discussing the efforts of paleozoologists to distinguish the two, is that the wild pig is a hyperbolic version of its domestic cousin.

9. For pig husbandry, see Laurans, "L'élevage du porc"; Mane, "Toujours pourceaux."

10. Esther Pascua, "From Forest to Farm and Town: Domestic Animals from ca. 1000 to

ing a kind of wild liberty even in the heart of some of Europe's greatest cities, eating whatever they could find, primarily garbage, but sometimes human corpses they disinterred from cemeteries.¹¹ Nowhere, however, is the irrepressible wildness of domesticated pigs more evident than in their violent appetites. Evading human restrictions on and supervision of the consumption of meat by domestic animals, sows were notorious for eating their own piglets.¹² Pigs sometimes even killed—and ate—humans. According to Thomas of Cantimpré's *Liber de natura rerum*, domestic pigs would attack anyone, "candida maxime veste indutum"¹³ (especially those dressed in white), a tendency that must have especially troubled Thomas: by the time he finished this work, he was a Dominican, and hence wore a white habit under a black cloak. Chaucer evoked the violence of pigs in the *Knight's Tale*, where Mars's litany of terrors includes "the sowe [that] fretten the child right in the cradel" (the sow that eats the child right in the cradle; I.2019); Deschamps similarly wrote that pigs "enfants estranglent es berseaulx" (kill children in their cradles; 16); the political prophecy of John Ergome or Ergome pauses to dismiss the belief that Edward II's nurse substituted the son of an *auriga* (groom or swineherd) for her charge when a sow mauled him in his cradle;¹⁴ in 1379, three sows and their piglets overwhelmed and killed Perrinot Muet, a young swineherd;¹⁵ in Oxford in 1392, a sow killed and

ca. 1450," in Resl, *A Cultural History of Animals*, 85–86.

11. For a law attempting to control urban wandering pigs, see Henry Thomas Riley, trans., *Liber albus. The White Book of the City of London, Compiled by John Carpenter and Richard Whittington, 1419*, Rolls Series 12 (London: Longmans, 1859), 270. For other such laws, see Laurans, "L'élevage du porc," 530. By the twelfth century, many of these pigs would have belonged to the Hospitaler order of St. Anthony, whose bell-wearing pigs, raised both for the medicinal effects of their lard and to feed the needy, were allowed to roam city streets. See the complaint in the satiric "Bible" of the twelfth-century French poet Guiot de Provins: "il n'est citeiz, il n'est chastiaux / ou l'on ne voie lor porceals / d'Escosse jusc'a Antioche" (there is no city, no castle, where one can't see their pigs, from Scotland all the way to Antioch; 1961–63); Guiot de Provins, *Les Oeuvres de Guiot de Provins, poète lyrique et satirique*, ed. John Orr (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1915). For the urban consumption of garbage and corpses by pigs, see Michel Pastoureau, "L'animal et l'historien du Moyen Âge," in *L'Animal exemplaire au Moyen Âge (Ve–XVe siècle)*, ed. Jacques Berlioz and Marie Anne Polo de Beaulieu (Rennes: Rennes University Press, 1999), 19.

12. Trevisa, *Properties*, 18.99, observes that the sow "etep alle [of its piglets] somtyme outake þe firste," and Thomas of Cantimpré, *Libe de natura rerum*, 4.5, 111, that "Pessimae sues sunt, que filios natos laniant" (the worst sows are those who mutilate their own offspring).

13. *Ibid.*, 4.4, 110.

14. For a discussion of the poem, which aimed to explain or excuse Edward's notoriously inept reign, see Roy Martin Haines, *King Edward II: Edward of Caernarfon, His Life, His Reign, and Its Aftermath, 1284–1330* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 20 and 44.

15. Evans, *Criminal Prosecution of Animals*, 144–45.

ate six-month-old Agnes Perone.¹⁶ All homicidal animals were subject to execution, but the evidence above and additional recorded attacks indicate that no domesticated animals were more murderous than pigs; as Michel Pastoureau observed, “la vedette du bestiaire judiciaire est toujours partout le porc”¹⁷ (the star of the animal trial is always and everywhere the pig). Violent and domestic pigs pose a danger worse than bodily harm: they affront the human itself. By killing and eating other animals, pigs lay claim to, even if only temporarily and without any institutional support, the dominion within human zones of control that only humans should possess. When pigs kill a human, they treat that human as if it were itself a pig, or, they would have, were the human not been supported by its interpassive network of care, exhibited, among other places, in the animal trials themselves. The trials do not so much elevate killer animals to the status of the human as they return humans, humiliated by having been killed by domestic animals, to the status of having been murdered.

In their violence, pigs behaviorally manifest a resemblance always present simply because of the anatomical likeness between humans and pigs. This point appears in Aristotle, and reappears throughout the Middle Ages in “le jeu de mots ana-grammatique *porcus/corpus*”¹⁸ (the anagrammatic play on words *porcus/corpus*) and in a great many texts and practices, whether a recent zoological handbook, which notes, “the digestive similarity and nutrient requirements of the pig and human are remarkably similar,”¹⁹ or several medieval anatomical manuals, such as the early-twelfth-century *Anatomia Porci*, sometimes ascribed to Copho the Salernitan, which states that “Et cum inter bruta animalia quaedam ut simia in exterioribus nobis inveniuntur similia, interiorum partium nulla inveniuntur adeo similia ut porci”²⁰

16. Rowland, *Blind Beasts*, 71. The sow was subsequently arrested.

17. Michel Pastoureau, *Les animaux célèbres* (Paris: Bonneton, 2001), 135. For more cases, see Rowland, *Animals with Human Faces*, 37–38. According to Rowland, the most recent murder trial of a pig took place in the Balkans in 1864.

18. Pastoureau, “L’animal,” 19. Pastoureau does not cite the section of Aristotle he is referencing, but he could have been referring to sections of *De Animalibus* I.16 and 17 or *De Partibus Animalium* III.12.

19. Pond and Mersmann, *Biology of the Domestic Pig*, 25.

20. Edited and translated in Corner, *Anatomical Texts of the Earlier Middle Ages*, 51; Latin on 48. Corner’s edition collates several manuscripts and early modern printed editions (see 44 for Corner’s partial list of sources). Cf. the passage in another collated edition, Karl Sudhoff, “Die erste Tieranatomie von Salerno und ein neuer salernitanischer Anatomietext,” *Archiv für Geschichte der Mathematik, der Naturwissenschaften, und der Technik* 10 (1927): 141, “Et cum bruta animalia quaedam ut simia in exterioribus, quaedam (ut porcus) in interioribus nobis videantur similia, secundum positionem interiorum nulla nobis inveniuntur (adeo) similia sicut porci, et ideo in eis anathomiam fieri destinavimus.” For further study, demonstrating that the immediate antecedents of the *Anatomia porci* are textual rather than

(although some animals, such as monkeys, are found to resemble ourselves in external form, there is none so like us internally as the pig): then, dissecting the human by way of the pig, it delves into the circulatory, respiratory, and other systems, concentrating on its uterus. Notably, Peter the Chanter's *Verbum Abbreviatum* also observes that "porcus autem multam habet convenientiam cum homine in corpore, sicut ex anatomia et divisione ejus patet" (also, the pig has much in common with humans in its body, as is shown from the arrangement of its internal organs; *PL* 205: 337D–338A). Peter's work has nothing to do with natural science or medical instruction; it is a moral treatise that makes this observation in the course of likening various animals to different kinds of people. The fact that a work so far removed from natural history or medical training contains not only the usual comparison, but also an echo of the *porcus/corpus* pun, suggests how commonplace the comparison must have been, at least in intellectual circles. Narrative as well as anatomical and certain doctrinal treatises also agree with the pun. My third chapter relates several stories in which human flesh and pork substituted for each other. Some additional, similar stories include one from Gervase of Tilbury, who recalls the customs of the Gauls of Arles before their conversion to Christianity, who fattened up several youths over the course of a year "as if they were pigs" to prepare them for sacrifice to their gods.²¹ *Decameron* 4.9 tells of a human heart disguised as a boar's heart, served and eagerly consumed.²² Ademar of Chabannes speaks of Roger, a Norman duke operating in Western Spain, who in 1018 appalled his Saracen captives by daily taking a prisoner, "quasi porcum . . . dividens"²³ (breaking

empirical, and hypothesizing oral transmission of Greek learning prior to the medieval age of Latin translations, see Ynez Violé O'Neill, "Another Look at the 'Anatomia Porci,'" *Viator* 1 (1970): 115–24. The thirteenth-century *Anatomia Magistri Nicolai Physici*, also translated in Corner, likewise states that "some kinds of animals are much like man, especially in outward aspect, for instance, monkeys and bears, while others, such as the pig, are similar to man internally; and therefore the anatomists chose the latter kind, and in particular the female pig, which shows the greatest likeness to the human structure in all internal organs, including the uterus."

21. Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia*, 297.

22. Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. G. H. McWilliam (New York: Penguin, 1972). For other versions of this tale, see the discussion of *Châtelain de Couci* in Laura Hibbard Loomis, *Mediaeval Romance in England: A Study of the Sources and Analogues of the Noncyclic Metrical Romances* (New York: B. Franklin, 1924), 252–62; and Milad Doueihi, *A Perverse History of the Human Heart* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), *passim*.

23. Ademar of Chabannes, *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. Pascale Bourgain, Richard Allen Landes, and Georges Pon, CCCM 129 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 174. It has been a critical commonplace for more than a century to connect this incident with the Middle English *Richard Coeur de Lion*.

him up as if he were a pig), and feeding him to the remaining survivors, while he pretended in their sight to eat a similar meal: to terrorize the region, Roger let the last prisoner escape to spread the news. Later in this chapter, I discuss a hagiographic tale in which Saint Nicholas resurrects three young scholars made into pork pies by a murderous butcher. Much is suggested, too, by theatrical special effects: in one Passion play, to simulate the bursting of Judas's bowels when he hangs himself, the actor playing this part let slip a bag full of pig's entrails.²⁴ Because of all these points—the pig's violence, its anatomical similarity to humans, and its failure to be fully domesticated—the pig, to recall *Sidrak and Bokkus*, is the animal most “lich to man.”²⁵

As I have argued repeatedly, humans attempt to claim their position as human, with all this implies about human uniqueness, by dominating life that through legitimized domination becomes relegated to being animal. Paradoxically, the pig's very likeness to humans further confirms the pig's status as the most animal of animals, precisely because its likeness to humans demands that it be treated like a pig in order to be one. Subjugating pigs allows humans to become more confident of their claim to be human, since if a creature so resistant to occupying its place in the animal order could be treated like an animal, humans could be especially convinced of their abyssal difference from other worldly creatures. Nonetheless, the very necessity of dominating pigs also reminds humans of the mutual contingency of being pig and being human, for even a dominated pig remains a category violation. They are wild and domestic: as Hildegard of Bingen puts it, “et in aviditate sua lupinos mores habet, quoniam caetera animalia discindit; et caninos mores habet in eo, quod cum hominibus quemadmodum canis libenter moratur” (and in its greed it [the domestic pig] has wolfish habits, seeing that it tears apart other animals; it has in it also doggish habits, in that it stays freely with people just as dogs do; *PL* 197: 1325D). It is animal-like and human-like, reviled for its appetite but useless without it, permitted to live only to be killed, but at the same time also fundamentally ungovernable, even murderous, qualities that in their aggregate bind pigs to their masters in a conflict that can never be settled.

24. Mons Passion Play (c. 1501). See Jody Enders, *Death by Drama and Other Medieval Urban Legends* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 178, and 285 n43, which cites this stage direction, “Ycy creve Judas par le ventre et les trippes saillent dehors, et l'ame sort.”

25. For more on the cultural interconnections between humans and pigs, see Claudine Fabre-Vassas, *The Singular Beast*; Claudine Fabre-Vassas, “Les Chrétiens et les juifs autour le cochon,” in *Identité alimentaire et altérité culturelle: actes du colloque de Neuchâtel, 12, 13 novembre 1984* (Neuchâtel: Institut d'ethnologie, 1985), 59–84; Peter Stallybrass and Alon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), chapter 2, “Thinking with Pigs,” 44–59; and Pastoureau, “L'animal,” 19.

Unsurprisingly, several medieval works deride those humans who refuse to subjugate animals, and especially those who refuse to subjugate pigs, as being themselves piglike or as being particularly vulnerable to pigs. In the “Former Age,” Chaucer calls the acorns eaten by the vegetarian ascetics of the Golden Age “mast, hawes, and swich pounage” (mast, haws, and such pannage; 7) and “mast or apples” (37).²⁶ “Mast” and pannage refer solely to the food of pigs. Andrew Galloway reads Chaucer as ironically undercutting the traditional praise for the asceticism of the Golden Age: as Galloway observes, pannage is a winter food; therefore, the Golden Age diet represents seasonal shortage rather than praiseworthy restraint.²⁷ This works, to a degree, since the diet of these Golden Age ascetics does recall the typical ascetic woodland diet of roots and herbs found in, for example, *Sir Orfeo* and *Parnopeu de Blois*.²⁸ However, creatures that customarily eat pannage, mast, and hawes, namely pigs, suffer hardship from neither winter nor this diet. Their hardship arrives from elsewhere, for the diet does not starve but rather fattens them, readying them for their winter slaughter, an event illustrated in innumerable medieval calendars. For Chaucer’s ascetics to eat mast and pannage may illustrate the necessities of government and commerce; the diet may suggest a renunciatory diet; but it also suggests another result for humans who live meatlessly: that having abdicated their human responsibility to dominate animals, they have lost their human protections and become as vulnerable as pigs to the appetites of properly carnivorous humans. The *contrapasso* is less subtle in tales that inculcated prejudice against religions opposed to eating pigs. In a representative scurrilous twelfth-century vita by Guibert of Nogent, Mohammed collapses, due either to epilepsy or to drunkenness, and is eaten by passing pigs. As Guibert mockingly explains, Mohammed’s humiliating death accounts for the Mus-

26. “The Former Age,” in Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, gen. ed. Larry Benson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1987), 650–51.

27. Andrew Galloway, “Chaucer’s Former Age and the Fourteenth-Century Anthropology of Craft: The Social Logic of a Premodernist Lyric,” *ELH* 63 (1996): 535–54. See also Nicola Masciandaro, *The Voice of the Hammer: The Meaning of Work in Middle English Literature* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 94–116, whose argument that the poem critically examines nostalgia suggests my approach.

28. Anne Laskaya and Eve Salisbury, eds., *The Middle English Breton Lays* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1995), where, during Orfeo’s self-imposed exile, “he al day digge and wrote / Er he finde his fille of rote. / In somer he liveth bi wild frut, / And berien bot gode lite; / In winter may he nothing finde / Bot rote, grases, and the rinde” (255–60). Joseph Gildea, ed., *Parnopeu de Blois: A French Romance of the Twelfth Century* (Villanova, PA: Villanova University Press, 1967), where the hero explains to his sister-in-law, who finds him seeking death in the Ardennes, “A cotes et a genoz vois / Querant herbetes par ce bois” (I have been in the woods on all fours seeking herbs; 6135–36).

lim prohibition of pork.²⁹ A similar logic pervades an antisemitic legend, especially popular in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century England, that imagines the Jewish ancestry of some pigs. During the Holy Family's exile in Egypt, Jesus plays with children from the Jewish community, occasionally striking his playmates dead. Understandably nervous, the Jewish families decide to hide their children. Jesus finds his friends hidden in an oven, and questions its guard about its contents. When the guard claims not to know, Jesus asks what the oven contains. The guard lies again, saying, "Pigs." And with that, Jesus transforms the Jewish children into pigs. As one version explains, "And euereft sethþe for to þis / Þis Gyv for broþur heold i wis / Euerech swyn in heore manere" (and ever since this happened, Jews consider all swine their brothers, as is their habit; 1043–45).³⁰ Claudine Fabre-Vassas and Winfried Frey each observed that the consumption of pork can function as a kind of Eucharist, joining its eaters, like the Eucharist, to the Corpus Christi, while the Muslim and Jewish refusal to eat pork excludes them from this mystical body of the community of believers.³¹ But since

29. Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, trans. Robert Levine (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1997), 35–36: "But now to describe how this marvelous law-giver made his exit from our midst. Since he often fell into sudden epileptic fits, with which we have already said he struggled, it happened once, while he was walking alone, that a fit came upon him and he fell down on the spot; while he was writhing in this agony, he was found by some pigs, who proceeded to devour him, so that nothing could be found of him except his heels. . . . They imagined that he had been taken up into heaven, with only his heels left as a monument for his faithful adherents, who visit them with great veneration, and condemn eating pork, because pigs consumed their lord with their bites." For such stories, see Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1993), 99–130. Note the confused example in Nigel R. Thorp, ed., *La Chanson de Jérusalem* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992), "La l'estranglerent porc, si con oï conter / Por çou ne valt Juus de car de porc goster" (there pigs strangled him, as I have heard told, which is why Jews do not wish to taste pigs' flesh; 6154–55).

30. "Kindheit Jesu" in Carl Horstmann, ed., *Altenglische Legenden* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1875), from MS Laud 108. For more Middle English examples, see Carl Horstmann, ed., *Sammlung altenglischer Legenden* (Heildesheim: Georg Olms, 1878) for the versions of Harley 3954 and Harley 2399, and Carl Horstmann, ed., "Nachträge zu den Legenden," *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 74 (1885): 327–65 for the version of British Museum Add. 31042 (similar to that of Harley 2399). For an Anglo-Norman example of this story, see Maureen Barry McCann Boulton, ed., *Les enfances de Jesu Crist* (London: ANTS, 1985), lines 1101–56. Medieval insular visual depictions survive in at least four places: Montague Rhodes James, "Rare Medieval Tiles and their Story," *The Burlington Magazine* 42 (1923): 32–37; Kathryn A. Smith, "The Neville of Hornby Hours and the Design of Literate Devotion," *The Art Bulletin* 81 (1999): figure 10; W. O. Hassall, *The Holkham Bible Picture Book* (London: Dropmore Press, 1954), f. 33.

31. Fabre-Vassas, "Cochon," 61, "Par le cochon . . . les juifs se sont séparés de leurs voisins et de leurs oppresseurs mais, inversement, le christianisme devait, pour s'affirmer, renier ses racines juives en renouant avec le cochon interdit" (Jews are separated from their neighbors and oppressors by the pig, but, inversely, to establish itself, Christianity had to

those who refuse to eat pork might as well be pork, these stories also expel Muslims and Jews from their worldly participation in the community of the human: those who dominate and consume pigs form what might be known as the *corpus hominis*, while distinguishing themselves from and generating the *corpus porci*. At the same time, these stories make nonchristians bear the burden of the failure of the operations of the human. If, as the stories claim, Muslims and Jews are especially vulnerable to pigs and to being confused with pigs, then any problem in the human system seems to be due to Muslim and Jewish irresponsibility in performing their human duties, rather than due to the general, and, it might be said, ecumenical inadequacy of the system itself, an inadequacy that is nowhere more evident than in the pig, this matter out of place,³² this uncategorizable filth whose filth is also the ineradicable filth of the human itself.

II.

Making Mastery in *The Avowyng of Arthur*

. . . [O]ur panicky pugnacity as we challenge him is not virtue but at bottom the irrational instinct of an active power organism in the presence of another such organism, of a sea slug of vigorous voracity in the presence of another such sea slug.

—Edmund Wilson, *Patriotic Gore*, xxxii

The boar hunt narrated by one fifteenth-century romance illustrates these porcine-human dynamics especially well. This romance, the *Avowyng of Arthur*, is obscure enough to require a summary.³³ After an invocation to

renounce its Jewish roots in making up with the forbidden pig). She makes a similar point in *Singular Beast*, 155. Winfried Frey, “Jews and Christians at the Lord’s Table?,” in *Food in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, ed. Melitta Weiss Adamson (New York: Garland, 1995), 113, argues that food was “a vehicle used by the Christian majority to secure its identity as a group while at the same time marginalizing the Jewish minority.”

32. Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 44, “If we can abstract pathogenicity and hygiene from our notion of dirt, we are left with the old definition of dirt as matter out of place. This is a very suggestive approach. It implies two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order. Dirt, then, is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is a system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements.”

33. The single extant copy of *The Avowyng of Arthur* appears in the mid-fifteenth-century Irish Blackburn Manuscript, which has two other romances, *The Awntyrs of Arthur* and *Sir Amadace*, and, in a separate hand, records and memoranda of the Manor of Hale in southwest Lincolnshire. It dates anywhere from the later fourteenth century to the mid fifteenth-century.

God, the story proper begins with Arthur, Gawain, Kay, and Baldwin in Carlisle, listening to a huntsman's account of a mighty boar that killed many of his dogs. Thrilled by the tale, the knights go hunting, but the boar drives them off. Arthur vows to kill the boar and commands his knights to make their own vows: Gawain vows to keep a vigil and Kay to defeat any knight who impedes his forest perambulation, while Baldwin, distinctively, vows to be unstintingly generous with his food and never to fear death or be jealous over a woman. In the *Avowyng*'s first part (until line 477), Arthur kills and butchers the boar; Kay meets and is defeated by a knight, Menealfe of the Montayne, who has kidnapped a noblewoman; and Gawain, having kept his vigil, defeats Menealfe twice, first to ransom Kay and then to compel Menealfe to give up the woman and deliver himself to the judgment of Guinevere. In the second part (until line 909), Arthur tests Baldwin's fidelity to his vows. First Arthur sends six knights in disguise against him; Baldwin's refusal to acknowledge the combat to Arthur, let alone his victory, attests to his fearlessness. Arthur then commands a minstrel to scrutinize Baldwin's generosity, a test Baldwin easily passes. Finally, after dispatching Baldwin on an overnight hunt, Arthur commands one of his knights to lie naked but still with Baldwin's wife until Baldwin returns. When Baldwin discovers a stranger in bed with his wife and Arthur sitting on the edge of the bed playing chess with one of his maidservants, he keeps his last vow by refusing to be jealous or even to ask what could have led to such an odd scene. The romance's final section comprises Baldwin's account of several episodes from his life that explain his choice of vows and his values: the first episode, concerning murderous, jealous laundrywomen who double as camp prostitutes, demonstrates that jealousy and women are a deadly combination; the second, in which a cowardly knight hiding from battle is killed anyway, proves that no one can escape the ordained time of death; the third, in which besieged knights trick their enemy into thinking that they are well provisioned, demonstrates that goods should be freely shared.³⁴ Arthur declares, "thine avowes arne profetabull" (your vows are well taken; 1130), and the work concludes with a prayer that echoes the romance's first line: "Now Jhesu Lord, Hevyn Kynge, / He graunt us all His blessynge, / And gife us all gode endinge, / That made us on the mulde. Amen" (Now Jesus Lord, Heaven's King, may he grant us all his blessing, and grant us good endings, who made us out of earth. Amen; 1145–48).

For a description of the manuscript and its contents, see Roger Dahood, ed., *The Avowing of King Arthur* (New York: Garland, 1984).

34. For sources of the vows, see E. A. Greenlaw, "The Vows of Baldwin: A Study in Mediaeval Fiction," *PMLA* 21 (1906): 575–636.

Criticism of the *Avowyng* that has not simply dismissed the romance as bad art has focused on its presentation of warrior masculinity, either by admiring it or by critiquing it, as does Patricia Clare Ingham, who argued that the warrior culture of Arthur's court cements its authority at the expense of dead and silenced women.³⁵ Women, however, are not the *Avowyng*'s only victims: the romance also kills off a boar, giving this death as much attention as it does those of the women. To be sure, at first glance the boar fight in the *Avowyng* simply follows the common formula of boar hunts in other romances. It begins with a futile charge on horseback that shatters the knight's lance; then the boar kills the horse. This is the pattern of *Sir Eglamour of Artois* (391–93) and Malory's *Tristrem de Lyones*, in which, during the mad Lancelot's fight, the bore "rove oute the longys and the harte of the horse, that sir Launcelot felle to the erthe" (tore out the lungs and heart of the horse, so that Sir Lancelot fell to the earth).³⁶ Also typical are Arthur's fighting the boar on foot³⁷ and the fight's religious cast: Arthur prays to St. Margaret (probably Margaret of Antioch, for reasons to be explained below), while in *Bevis of Hampton* Bevis prays "to God and Mari" (to God and Mary; 804) for assistance in killing his boar. Nor does the *Avowyng* distinguish itself by calling its boar "Satnace/Satenas" (Satan; 67, 120) and "fynde" (fiend; 104), as comparisons between boars and the devil were a medieval commonplace: Rabanus Maurus, in his *De Universo* 8.8, explains that "aper propter ferocitatem et fortitudinem nimiam

35. Patricia Clare Ingham, *Sovereign Fantasies: Arthurian Romance and the Making of Britain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 171–80 and 189. For criticism dismissive of the *Avowyng*, see John Fleming, "Medieval Manuscripts in the Taylor Library," *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 38 (1977): 117, which characterizes the romances of the Blackburn Manuscript as works that "most polished writers probably found old-fashioned, unsophisticated, and altogether lacking in French elegance," and J. A. W. Bennett, ed. and Douglas Gray, edited and completed, *Middle English Literature*, vol. 1, Part 2, *Oxford History of English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 178, which calls it "rather gauchely told." For earlier articles on warrior masculinity, see John A. Burrow, "The Avowing of King Arthur," in *Medieval Literature and Antiquities: Studies in Honour of Basil Cottle*, ed. Myra Stokes and T. L. Burton (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1987), 99–109, which argues that the first part of the romance concerns the virtues of youth, while the second half concerns the stoic virtues of a middle-aged warrior; also, David Johnson, "The Real and the Ideal: Attitudes toward Love and Chivalry as seen in *The Avowing of King Arthur*," in *Companion to Middle English Romance*, ed. H. Aertsen and A. A. MacDonald (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1990), 189–208, particularly at 203, which argues that the first section is a typical romance, fantastic and ahistorical, while the second is a realistic presentation of Baldwin, "a figure who more closely reflects the values of a flesh-and-blood fifteenth-century Englishman."

36. *Eglamour*, in Hudson, *Four Middle English Romances*. Thomas Malory, *Works*, ed. Eugène Vinaver, vol. 2 (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), XII.3, 498.

37. Rooney, *Hunting*, 5.

diabolus intelligi potest” (the boar can be understood as the devil on account of its excessive fierceness and strength; *PL* 111:207B), while, from the later Middle Ages, Henri de Ferrières’s moralized hunting manual goes so far as to liken the boar to Antichrist.³⁸ Amid all these similarities, the *Avowyng*’s hunt nonetheless distinguishes itself by being much more than a set piece or plot device. Unlike several other Middle English works that open with a hunt, such as *The Awntyrs of Arthur*, the hunt of the *Avowyng* does not convey the hunter toward an otherworld, a spirit, or a monster that constitutes or initiates the romance’s central conflict: for example, *Sir Gawain and the Carle of Carlisle* follows its list of Arthur’s knights with a deer hunt that propels the work toward its narrative core, Gawain’s encounter and contest with a monstrous host.³⁹ Other fights with anthropophagous boars in Middle English romance—in *Guy of Warwick* (6417–60), *Sir Eglamour* (346–504), and *Bevis of Hampton* (735–898)—only number among several other of their hero’s combats.⁴⁰ The *Avowyng*’s boar hunt is Arthur’s only fight, in fact the only noble act of killing in the romance, as the deaths in Baldwin’s autobiographical exempla are either accidents of war or ignoble murders.

A symbolic interpretation, traditional to medieval animal studies, might interpret Arthur’s fight with the boar as an opportunity for Arthur to differentiate himself from a grotesque mirror of his royal authority. After all, in the Merlin prophecy often included in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *History of the Kings of Britain*, Arthur is the “Boar of Cornwall,”⁴¹ while boars in turn were often troped by knights, as in the cynegetic manual of Gace de la Buigne, the *Roman de Deduis*, which referred to the boar hunt and boar with terms equally suitable for a human opponent: “se combater,” “la bataille,” and “enmy.”⁴² John Trevisa wrote that the boar “useth tuskes in

38. Henri de Ferrières, *Le Livre de chasse du roy Modus*, ed. Gunnar Tilander (Paris: Librairie Cynégétique, 1931), 144–46. For further discussion of the moralization of the pig, see Voisenet, *Bêtes et hommes*, 32–35.

39. The romance is edited in Hahn, *Sir Gawain: Eleven Romances and Tales*.

40. Julius Zupitza, ed., *The Romance of Guy of Warwick. The Second or 15th-Century Version*, EETS e. s. 25, 26 (London: N. Trübner & Co., 1875); also see Julius Zupitza, ed., *The Romance of Guy of Warwick*, EETS e. s. 42, 49, 59 (London: N. Trübner & Co., 1883), 6369–77.

41. For a brief discussion of the association between Arthur and boars, see Nirmal Dass, *The Avowing of King Arthur: A Modern Verse Translation* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987), xxvii–viii. For more references to comparisons between knights and boars, see Marcelle Thiébaux, “The Mouth of the Boar as Symbol in Medieval Literature,” *Romance Philology* 22 (1969): 286; and Friedrich Bangert, *Die Tiere im altfranzösischen Epos* (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1885), whose section on wild pigs cites comparisons from *Aliscans*, the *Conquête de Jerusalem*, and many other chivalric narratives.

42. Quoted in Thiébaux, “Mouth of the Boar,” 283.

stede of swerde and hath a hard schield brood and thikke in the right syde and putteth that always azeins his wepene that persueth him" (uses tusks instead of sword and has a hard, broad, and thick shield on its right side with which it counters the weapons used against him);⁴³ the boar's "schilde" in the *Avowyng* is so strong that Arthur's "grete schafte that was long / all to spildurs hit spronge" (great shaft was shattered into splinters; 196–98). The hunting manual of Gaston Phébus portrayed boars as the most dangerous opponent a hunter might encounter: Gaston attests that many times during boar hunts he was borne to the ground, his horse killed under him, and that, unlike the lion or leopard, the boar could even kill a man with a single blow that split him open from his knees to his chest, "comme on feroit d'un coutel" (as if it were using a knife).⁴⁴ Given Gaston Phébus's witness to the strength of the boar's tusks, the boar might even do more than equalize the combat; the "boar hunt" might well refer to a hunt *by* a boar that uses its "knives" to butcher the butcher.⁴⁵ In Arthur's combat, then, he fights an animal outfitted with weapons and wearing armor as he was, and, once he lost his horse, he meets his opponent on a level field.⁴⁶

Before the boar's den lies a grisly scene: "Men myghte noghte his cowch kenne / For howundes and for slayn men / That he hade draun to his denne / And brittunt all to bonus" (men might not see his den because of all the hounds and slain men that he had dragged there and butchered to their bones; 181–84). This clear evidence of the boar's animal savagery also heightens the ambiguity of the boar's resemblance to Arthur, for it invokes the consequences of martial dominion gone wrong, as described in late-fourteenth-century critiques of war that accused magnates of savage disregard for the common good. John Clanvowe's Christian treatise, *The Two Ways*, inveighs against both the "þe reuers . . . þat distroyen and wynnen manye

43. Trevisa, *Properties*, 18.7. See also *MED* "shēld" (4) (a), "the tough hide at the shoulders and neck of a wild boar."

44. Quoted in Alice Planche, "La bête singulière," in *La Chasse au Moyen Âge: Actes du Colloque du Nice (22–24 June, 1979)* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1980), 498.

45. For a description of technique in a boar hunt, see Thiébaux, "Mouth of the Boar," 281–82.

46. *Ibid.* points out the rarity of killing a boar from horseback in noble boar-hunting. I disagree with Alice Planche, "La bête singulière," in *La Chasse au Moyen Âge*, 495, who writes that fights with boars were not fights between equals since the boar lacked "l'auréole royale de lion, [et] il n'est pas comme l'ours capable d'adopter la station verticale qui permet le véritable corps à corps" (the royal glory of the lion and it was not, like the bear, capable of adopting the vertical posture that permits true hand-to-hand combat). For a reading of boar hunts agreeing with mine, see An Smets and Baudouin van den Abeele, "Medieval Hunting," in Resl, *A Cultural History of Animals*, 61: "the boar hunt was considered to be the most dangerous and martial form of hunting, a sort of man-to-man combat."

loondis . . . þat woln bee venged proudly and dispitously of euery wrong þat is seid or doon to hem” (the despoilers that destroy and conquer many lands . . . who would be avenged proudly and mercilessly against every wrong said or done to them; 485–93) and the very “bookes and soonges” (books and songs; 494) that praise warriors, and Philippe de Mezière’s *Letter to King Richard II* contrasts the war, misery, and rapine of “le jardin horrible et perrileux” with a Utopian garden of peace.⁴⁷ Ideal knights are supposed to defend kingdoms, save the weak, and uphold the law, but the boar, and “reuers” too, serve only their own appetites for flesh and violence. Roving knights such as Kay in the *Avowyng*, who refuse to behave with Baldwin’s moderation, vow “to dethe dighte” (fight to the death; 136) anyone who frustrates their desires, transform—or at least try to transform—sylvan retreats into horrible gardens filled with corpses. Arthur himself, as Ingham reminds us, establishes his order only at the expense of those too weak to resist him, and his mere curiosity compels him to send a cohort to fight against Baldwin. Then, like the tyrants of the *Governance of Kings and Princes* who “don wrong to citeseyns in wyues and douȝtres” (do wrong to citizens through their wives and daughters),⁴⁸ he barges in on Baldwin’s protesting wife (821–32). The boar’s purpose in the *Avowyng* becomes obvious: only in comparison to an anthropophagous beast can Arthur’s violence satisfy any ideal of chivalric rectitude.

But as apprehensive as the *Avowyng* is about gender and right rule, it is also concerned with the question of the human, as is apparent from the romance’s very beginning:

He that made us on the mulde,
And fair fourmet the folde,
Atte His will, as He wold,
The see and the sande,
Giffe hom joy that will here
Of dughti men and of dere,
Of haldurs that before us were,
That lift in this londe. (1–8)

47. Maurice Keen, “Chaucer and Chivalry Revisited,” in *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France: Proceedings of the 1995 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Matthew Strickland (Stamford, Lincolnshire: Paul Watkins, 1998), 1–12, directed me to these two works. See John Clanvowe, *The Works of Sir John Clanvowe*, ed. V. J. Scattergood (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1975); Philippe de Mézières, *Letter to King Richard II: A Plea Made in 1395 for Peace between England and France*, ed. G. W. Coopland (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1975), 129.

48. Giles of Rome, *The Governance of Kings and Princes: John Trevisa’s Middle English Translation of the De regimine principum of Aegidius Romanus*, ed. David C. Fowler, Charles F. Briggs, and Paul G. Remley (New York: Garland, 1997), 339.

He that made us out of earth and shaped the firmament, the sea, and the sand, according to his will, let him give joy to those who will hear about doughty and fierce men, the leaders who lived before us in this land.

On their face, these lines only combine piety with the praise of warrior forebears to preempt the accusations of frivolity often leveled against secular narrative, such as that in the prologue to the Middle English translation of Robert of Greatham's *Miroir*:

Loke nou to Tristrem, oþer of Gii of Warwike, oþer of ani oþer, & þou ne schalt finde non þat þer nis mani lesinges & gret; for hii ne be nouzt drawn out of holi writ, bot ich man þat makeþ hem enformeþ hem efter þe wil of hiis hert and þenkeþ þat it is soþe. And ne for þan, al is it vanite for to here al swich þinges & vnderstonde hem þat þe soule ne mai no gode.⁴⁹

Now consider *Tristan*, or *Guy of Warwick*, or any other, and you shall not find any without many great lies; for they are not drawn out of Scripture, but each man who makes them forms them after the will of his heart and thinks that it is true. And because of this, it is vanity to hear and understand all such things that may do the soul no good.

In promoting itself, the *Avowyng* also slyly degrades other Middle English romances. Several others, including *Sir Isumbras*, *Octavian*, and *Sir Eglamour*, open with prayers to Mary or Christ and reference an earlier time peopled with heroes: *The Awntyrs of Arthur*, which shares a manuscript with the *Avowyng*, opens "In the tyme of Arthur an aunter bytydde" (in the time of Arthur an adventure occurred).⁵⁰ The *Avowyng* bypasses such intercessors to pray directly to God the Father and Creator, the divine force responsible for creating "us" out of earth. Furthermore, by reaching beyond the heroic past to begin, as it were, in the mud, the *Avowyng* claims an interest more foundational than any passing chivalric greatness and implicitly charges other works with pettiness. Only then does the *Avowyng* reference the "dughti . . . haldurs" (doughty . . . leaders), that is, the Arthurian characters usually invoked at a romance's onset:

One was Arthur the Kinge,
Wythowtun any letting;

49. Thomas G. Duncan, ed., *The Middle English Mirror: Sermons from Advent to Sexagesima, with a Parallel Text of The Anglo-Norman Miroir* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2003), 3.

50. The other romance in the Ireland Blackburn manuscript, *Sir Amadace*, is acephalous. For a general sense of the openings of medieval romance, I have examined the beginning of each romance available in the TEAMS Middle English texts series.

Wyth him was mony lordinge
 Hardi of honde.
 Wice and war ofte thay were,
 Bold under banere,
 And wighte weppuns wold were,
 And stifly wold stond. (9–16)

One of these was Arthur the King, without any contradiction; with him were many hardy lords. Wise and wary they were, bold under banner, who bore mighty weapons, and staunchly would stand.

In the manner of other Middle English romances, the *Avowyng* invites readers to believe in the ancestral significance of Arthur and his retinue (“hal-durs that before us were”) and to identify themselves with Britain (“*this* londe”) and perhaps even with Carlisle and Inglewood Forest, that is, with Cumberland in particular, where the *Avowyng* was probably composed.⁵¹ First, though, *Avowyng* requires its readers to identify themselves with the “us” made “on the mulde.” The *Avowyng*’s characters are more than merely martial and brave, more than just English, more than just local heroes whose prowess centers Britain on Cumberland. They are fundamentally human, distinguished by their mastery over the world; by their use of tools, “wighte weppons”; and by their ability to “stond,” that is, both to endure and to stand, to possess the authentic erect posture possessed only by rational creatures, “us.”

Yet the first line of the *Avowyng*, “he that made us on the mulde,” does not necessarily exclude “us” from animals, also creatures of the “mulde.” A belief in human earthiness is attested by Genesis 3:19 as well as by God’s creation of Adam from the “mulde” in Genesis’s second creation story (see also, for example, 1 Corinthians 15:47–49); even in the first story, because God creates humans, men and women, on the same day as terrestrial animals, they have a certain “earthiness,” shared with other creatures, per the logic of hexameral commentaries. For example, the *Speculum Sacerdotale*, a fifteenth-century guide for priests, explains why fish but no other animals can be eaten during Lent: God cursed the earth, sparing the waters, “and therefore in tyme of fastynge it is noȝt lawefull for to ete of eny beste that longeth to the erpe, be it birde, be it beste crepyng or goynge on foure

51. Excepting the unlikely possibility that its author deliberately used a dialect other than his or her own, the *Avowyng* seems to have been set in the same region in which it was composed. Although its scribal features are those of the Midlands, its linguistic features are those of Cumberland, where the action of the poem occurs: see Hahn, *Sir Gawain: Eleven Romances and Tales*, 116.

feete" (and therefore in the time of fasting it is not lawful to eat of any beast that belongs to the earth, whether it is a bird, or a creeping beast, or one that goes about on four feet).⁵² That the earthiness of terrestrial creatures makes them akin to humans is clear in Aquinas's own explanation for Lenten prohibitions in *Summa Theologica*, 2a2ae q. 147, a. 8, "Whether it is fitting that those who fast should be bidden to abstain from flesh meat, eggs, and milk foods": "since suchlike animals are more like man in body, they afford greater pleasure as food." I have already observed the medieval fascination with the humanlike qualities of pigs' bodies and the similarity between their flesh and human flesh. Because of this interconnection, no animal that "longeth to the erpe" lays better claim than the pig to inclusion in the "us" of the *Avowyng*'s opening line, least of all because the pig more than any other animal proverbially "longeth to the erpe," in the sense of *desiring* the earth, longing to wallow in it.⁵³

The opening lines of the *Avowyng* distinguish its subjects from the other creatures made from "mulde" by only two clear means, first and most obviously, by the references to "dughti men" (6), "prest men" (bold men; 19), and "wayt men" (mighty men; 24). The apparently unnecessary repetition of "men" suggests a struggle to limit the scope of the first line's "us" against adjectives that may just as well be applied to boars: they too are "dughti," "prest," and "wayt"; because of their tusks and "shield," they also "wighte weppuns wold were, / And stifly wold stond" (15–16), if "stond" is understood in what is undoubtedly its primary sense here, "withstand." A surer containment of the "us" occurs when the *Avowyng* describes its subjects as possessing the rational qualities of "kyndenesse and curtesy" (kindness and courtesy; 22). The capacities to make and keep vows, to care for women (though such care in this romance is predicated on female weakness and subjugation), and to worship God mark the human as human, for no animal—at least no ravenous boar—possesses these qualities. Thus, the opening lines of the *Avowyng* sketch the trajectory of human self-identification that I have been describing, from the all-encompassing "mulde," the corporeal substrate that humans share with terrestrial animals; through the doughtiness, the violence that humans share with and by which they distinguish themselves from animals; and then to "curtesy," which can be possessed only through reason, to which humans lay claim only through the violence of the previous stage.

With all this said, it is perverse to argue that the "us" provoked an uncer-

52. Weatherly, *Speculum Sacerdotale*, 53; its inclusion of birds among terrestrial creatures is unusual.

53. See *MED* s.v., "lōngen" (v.1), 2(e), "yearn for (Christ, the Virgin Mary); long for (the presence of)."

tainty in the medieval readers of the *Avowyng*, since, then as now, the category of the human was generally presented and accepted as one whose naturalness required neither interrogation nor consideration. Moreover, the opening lines of the *Avowyng* are mostly typical of romance; they are a gesture towards piety, a bit of throat-clearing to get the romance moving, and connect in no obvious way with the romance's narrative content. My unsuitable response is to take the lines too seriously by pausing in my progress into the narrative proper to demand why the *Avowyng* should devote several lines to establishing the humanity of its characters and why it should place these lines in a section of the poem likely meant to pass without notice.⁵⁴ Even in a straightforward effort to establish narrative roots in the human, the very terms proper to the human cannot be considered as *only* human without some kind of intervention, an intervention, as it were, smuggled in before the romance proper begins. In short, it is evident here both that even a thoughtless presentation of human identity also articulates something that confuses it, and that—to intone the credo of critical theory—natural qualities always require an effort, perhaps an impossible effort, to be presented as natural.

This dynamic, which the opening lines only hint at, becomes more explicit with the appearance of the huntsman at Arthur's court. His panicked recollection of his failed hunt concludes, "iwise he were [I thought the boar was] wighte" (64). The huntsman might have used any number of words to characterize the boar's violence. "Iwise he were wrothe [crazed with rage]," which alliterates just as well as "wighte," could have been a better fit, given the notorious fury of boars.⁵⁵ Instead, the huntsman recalls the very word used to characterize the lawful and noble violence of Arthur and his knights, who, per the *Avowyng*'s introduction, "wighte weppuns wold were" (15). Furthermore, while the adjective "wighte" means "mighty," as a noun it means "person," as in the kidnapper Menealfe's boast "There wan I this

54. In reading the opening lines too closely, I have been inspired by Žižek's discussions of "over-identification," as, for example, in Žižek, *Plague of Fantasies*, 22, where he observes that "an ideological edifice can be undermined by a too-literal identification, which is why its successful functioning requires a minimal distance from its explicit rules. Is not an exemplary case of such a subversion-through-identification provided by Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Solder Schweik*, the novel whose hero wreaks total havoc by simply executing the orders of his superiors in an overzealous and all-too-literal way?"

55. See the early fifteenth-century *Livro da Montaria* of João I, king of Portugal, who writes in this hunting manual that the boar is "enraged" rather than courageous, because "rage describes a man whose heart is moved by anger, who, beyond the bounds of reason and self-awareness, forgets all danger to body, honor, and reputation, and seeks only to put an end to the thing which angers him, in order to venge his spite"; quoted in Cummins, *Hound and the Hawk*, 100.

wighte” (there I won this person; 316).⁵⁶ The pun of the huntsman’s “iwise he were wighte” may thus indicate that he has recognized the boar as being human like himself, but given what happens next, it may well indicate that the huntsman has recognized the humanity of the boar and begun to feel his own humanity slip. For when the noble hunting party, inspired by the huntsman’s tale, try (and fail) to kill the boar, the huntsman abandons them with this sneer: “butte sette my hed opon a store / Butte giffe he flaey yo all fawre” (but set my head upon a stake if [the boar] doesn’t flay all four of you; 110–11). The huntsman at once presents the boar as a butcher, the knights as potentially flayed prey, and himself, if the boar loses the next battle, as subject to treatment proper for a boar’s carcass.⁵⁷ Here, then, the huntsman imagines the knights and especially himself as victims the boar’s hunting prowess, pointing to the full consequences of the inability to master the boar. Arthur vows “to brittun him and downe bringe” (to butcher [the boar] and bring him down; 121), which he does, at which point “the hed of that hardy / He sette on a stake” (the head of that bold one [i.e., the boar] he set on a stake; 259–60). Though he might have done otherwise, Arthur stakes only the boar’s head, sparing the huntsman the consequences of his vow—and this in a romance whose second half concerns itself exclusively with the necessity of fulfilling vows. In so doing, Arthur either shows the huntsman mercy, or rather, contemptuously delegitimizes the huntsman’s promise to show that only knights or even only those who live up to their human responsibilities can be heard to make vows worth honoring.

To arrive at his human supremacy, Arthur first has to defeat a creature that could kill, flay, butcher, and indeed, cook him before it eats him. The *Avowynge* uses the same word, “brittun,” to describe both what Arthur does to the boar and what the boar has done to its victims (121 and 184): the huntsman’s mistake, then, is committed by the poem as well. Furthermore, in an image unique among Middle English descriptions of boar hunts, the boar smells “as kyle other kechine” (like a kiln or kitchen; 231). The culinary reference may humiliate the boar by associating it with kitchen imagery,⁵⁸ or, given the boar’s Satanic character, it may recall the hellmouth.⁵⁹ But it also suggests

56. See the *MED* s.v., “wight” (adj.) and “wight” (n.). The spellings of the most common forms of the two words are identical, suggesting they had the same pronunciation.

57. See *Bevis of Hampton* (828–29) and *Sir Eglamour of Artois* (494–95), both of which appear in Herzman et al., *Four Romances of England*.

58. For kitchens as a place of humiliation in the Middle Ages, see Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature in the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Williard R. Trask (New York: Harper & Row, 1953), 431–35.

59. I am indebted for the hellmouth observation to Hahn, *Sir Gawain: Eleven Romances and Tales*, 155.

that the supposed uniqueness of human alimentary culture and modes of violence is, like so much else in this fight, only a matter of contingent structural position. Arthur finally resists being cooked by praying to Saint Margaret. His invocation is both a generalized sign of piety, as Margaret was one of the most popular saints of late-medieval England,⁶⁰ and also a particularly efficacious defense against the boar: in the hagiography, a monstrous devil appears to Margaret and, in most versions of the story, swallows her, only to burst asunder when Margaret makes the sign of the cross. Osbern of Bokenham's *Legendys of Hooly Wummen* provides a representative Middle English exemplar of this story perhaps contemporary to the *Avowyng*:

This horrible beste vp-on hyr heed
 Put his mouth, whil she thus seyde,
 And eek his tunge, wych was fer reed
 Vndyr hyr hele anoon he leyde,
 And swelwyd hyr in euene at a breyde.
 And whan hyr cros in his mouth dede encrees,
 He brast on two, & she scapyd harmlees. (708–14)

The horrible beast put her head in his mouth while she prayed in such a way, and also his tongue, which was fire-red, he placed under her heels, and swallowed her immediately, and when she made her cross in his mouth, he burst in two, and she escaped uninjured.⁶¹

By invoking Margaret, Arthur thus prays for more than celestial assistance: he prays specifically to preserve his own human integrity against being swallowed, and to preserve it by destroying his adversary. Only at this point does Arthur finally defeat the boar, by stabbing “him inne atte the throte” (him in the throat; 249), the body part through which his “brittuned” corpse (or indeed carcass) would have passed on its way to being cooked. This is not, however, a clear, final victory. The *Avowyng* ends the stanza immedi-

60. Thomas Head, ed., *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology* (New York: Garland, 2000), 676, which points out that among churches dedicated to women Margaret ranks only behind the Virgin. See also the introductory material on Margaret of Antioch in Sherry L. Reames, ed., *Middle English Legends of Women Saints* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2003).

61. Osbern of Bokenham, *Legendys of Hooly Wummen*, ed. Mary S. Serjeantson, EETS o. s. 206 (London: Oxford University Press, 1938). At lines 187–91, Osbern dates the beginning of his work on the poem to September 7, 1443. For other Middle English lives, see Reames, *Legends of Women Saints*, which edits an anonymous life as well as lives by John Mirk and John Lydgate. Dahood, *Avowing*, 102, remarks on the similarity between Margaret and Arthur's demonic opponents, but makes no observation on demonic consumption.

ately prior to the boar's death with "His maistry he mekes," and begins the next with "Thus his maistry mekes he / Wyth dyntus that werun dughté" (His mastery he makes. Thus his mastery makes he, with blows that were doughty; 240–42). Antimetabolic links between stanzas are not unusual in Middle English poetry: see a thirteenth-century religious lyric on becoming a friar whose first stanza ends, "Becomen ich will frere" (I will become a friar; 6) and whose second stanza begins, "Frer menur I will me make" (I will become a Franciscan; 7); the second stanza ends, "Goddess wille to wurche" (God's will to work; 12) and the third begins, "Wurche I wille this workes gode" (Work I will these good works; 13).⁶² But the "maistry" sequence is the only such linkage in the *Avowynge*.⁶³ The unique repetition functions as more than a poetic or mnemonic flourish: it lends Arthur's blow an outsized rhetorical force to emphasize that much more is happening than the killing of an animal. Arthur is crafting his own mastery: "His maistry he mekes. / Thus his maistry mekes he." Even though he is a king, his mastery is not already accomplished, but must be made, in this moment, by Arthur himself. But the repeated lines also indicate that Arthur's task can never cease. Arthur, always the agent, never the object, is trapped within the action, both because mastery, particularly over a pig, is a relative, contingent position always subject to loss, and because mastery as such never arrives.

The aporiatic and inconclusive operations of Arthur's self-making resonate more richly if understood with Derrida's "Force of Law," an essay I introduced in the conclusion to my second chapter.⁶⁴ This essay engages with Walter Benjamin's "Critique of Violence," which distinguishes between foundational violence, "lawmaking violence," and the succeeding violence of the status quo, "law-preserving violence," which defends the new system and grants *anterior* legitimacy to the founding act.⁶⁵ Arthur's violence

62. Maxwell Luria and Richard Lester Hoffman, eds., *Middle English Lyrics* (New York: Norton, 1974), 154–55, incipit: "No more ne will I wicked be."

63. Lines 80–81 ("And furthe conne thay fare. / Unto the forest thay weynde") and 176–77 ("So sore gerutte him to drede. / He hade drede and doute") are as close as the *Avowynge* elsewhere comes to this repetition.

64. Derrida observes that the German *Gewalt* of Benjamin's title can also be translated as "the dominance or the sovereignty of legal power, the authorizing or authorized authority: the force of law," Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, 265.

65. There is a third key term, "divine violence," an act of "pure violence" unmediated by any view to a particular end, which destroys rather than makes or preserves law. Benjamin arrives at this concept by isolating violence itself, which he distinguishes from violence as means (but which is still violence, as Žižek, who sees it in the acts, for example, of the *sans-culottes*, *Violence*, 201). Derrida treats divine violence at length in the last section of his essay. Although Benjamin had mobilized this concept to hope for a world beyond the cycles or dialectic of the foundation and destruction of legal systems, Derrida sadly suggests that divine violence might be a kind of prolepsis of the "Final Solution" (see also Žižek, *Violence*,

can initially be understood as law-preserving violence, simply because the *Avowyng* does not narrate his rise to kingship. He is already “oure Kinge” (161), by reputation the ideal ruler, and therefore incarnates the status quo. As I have argued, the status quo also includes human supremacy over animals, but the very act of defending this supremacy against the boar “lays bare the violence of the juridical order itself.”⁶⁶ The boar nonetheless poses a threat still greater than the desublimation of the repressed violence of the human. The boar, which can butcher, flay, and cook like any human, can practice “informed mastery of the natural world, not just its violent domination,”⁶⁷ which is, as Susan Crane argues, the key aspect to elite self-conception of their hunting practices. The boar thus aims to do more than break the law, for if the boar successfully resists human rule and substitutes its own, the boar could at once act as a lawmaker and expel humans into being only criminals. By means of lawmaking violence, which is “able to justify, to legitimate . . . or to transform the relations of law . . . and so to present itself as having the right to law,”⁶⁸ the boar would transform the broken bodies of men, horses, and dogs around its den into legitimized signs of porcine superiority. It could claim the structural position of the human for itself and relegate Arthur and the knights to animality.

Even so, the boar should not be understood only as either a criminal—the target of law-preserving violence—or a lawmaker. The distinction between law-preserving and lawmaking violence ultimately cannot be sustained, for, as Derrida argues, “there is no more a pure foundation or pure position of law, and so a pure founding violence, than there is a purely preserving violence.”⁶⁹ Given the boar’s quasi-chivalric traits, it can be seen as participating in a mode of chivalric law-preserving violence in defense of its own porcine legitimacy, which, like Arthur’s, masters humans, horses, and dogs. Likewise Arthur can be seen at once a law-preserver and a lawmaker. Although the *Avowyng* may affect confidence in Arthur’s a priori regality, it also narrates the origin of the human and, for that matter, of the animal, both of which emerge out of the “mulde.” No sooner have humans emerged

199). For a differing, more enthusiastic reading of the term, see Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 52–64, and for more cautious reading, attuned to ethics, see Judith Butler, “Critique, Coercion, and Sacred Life in Benjamin’s ‘Critique of Violence,’” in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, ed. Hent Vries and Lawrence Eugene Sullivan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 201–19.

66. Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, 267.

67. Crane, “Ritual Aspects of the *Hunt à Force*,” in Hanawalt and Kiser, *Engaging with Nature*, 76.

68. Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, 268.

69. *Ibid.*, 272.

into doughtiness and rational behavior, than the huntsman announces the existence of another creature as earthy, doughty, and as skilled and eager in violence as the *Avowyng*'s human actors. The *Avowyng* decides in favor of humans, and presents humans as though their law has always been the only proper law. It presents itself as never having had to deliberately decide in favor of humans; nonetheless the events prior to the combat between Arthur and boar cannot but be recognized as taking place in the lawless aporia in which force tries to ground a new law.

In his *De naturis rerum*, Alexander Neckham explains that “dens apri ab apro seperatus acumen suum retinet quamdiu aper superstes est; quo mortuo, dens hebes efficitur”⁷⁰ (the tooth of a boar separated from the boar retains its sharpness as long as the boar is alive; when it is dead, the tooth is made blunt). In defeat, the boar ceases to be a threat; in fact, the evidence of its ever having been a threat is erased. Arthur's success quashes the resemblance between human and boar by securing supremacy and hence humanity for himself and his fellows, while condemning the boar to the degradation of being animal. The success, however, can only ever be temporary, because Arthur's lawmaking against the boar, like human lawmaking against the animal and thus the human creation of itself, cannot cease. Arthur's claim to the human remains secure only until he, always boarlike, meets his next chivalric, humanlike boar, with teeth just as sharp as any living boar's. Pigs, both wild and domestic, must always be resisted; they must be continually consigned to animality; and any failure of human vigilance will condemn humans to piglike degradation. Facing off against a humanoid pig, the most animal of animals, humans can never “catch up to the law.”⁷¹ As humans, all they can do is keep fighting.

III.

Interlude: Grunnius Corocotta Porcellus, euersor domi

In a roughly 300-word late-antique parodic will, the *Testamentum Porcelli* (the Will of the Little Pig), a cook informs the pig Grunnius Corocotta

70. Alexander Neckham, *De naturis rerum*, ed. Thomas Wright (London: Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1863), chapter 139, 220. See also Thomas of Cantimpré, *Liber de natura rerum*, IV.3, 109, “Sed hoc satis mirabile est in dentibus, quod scilicet in viva bestia idem possunt quod ferrum, detracti vero mortue vim incisionis perdidisse probantur.”

71. Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, 270.

Porcellus that he is about to be slaughtered. Grunnius pleads for mercy, but the cook grants him time only to write his will. In it, Grunnius bequeaths fodder to his relatives, bristles to cobblers, intestines to sausage makers, and, mixed among these practical legacies, his tongue to lawyers and “verbosis” (to the verbose; 5), and “cinaedis musculos”⁷² (muscles or anus to the unmanly; 5). In the late-antique world, the *Testamentum* earned two separate sneering allusions from Jerome, and it retained some popularity during the Middle Ages: seven manuscripts survive, dating mostly from the ninth to twelfth centuries, as do several early-modern editions.⁷³ The *Testamentum* is an early exemplar of the genre of animal testaments and parodic memorials for animals, many of which, like the “Testament of the Ass” and “The Little Hare Wept,” feature an animal bequeathing its dismembered body to various sectors of human society, and of which at least one, the pseudo-Ovidian “The Louse,” similarly describes a memorial inscription for the dead animal’s tomb.⁷⁴

Like any pig, Grunnius Corocotta Porcellus is ambiguous. Like a human, he has an individual name, perhaps even the familial name of a Roman citizen, yet the names themselves combine porcine, alimentary, and generally bestial traits. Grunnius derives from *grunnire*, “to grunt,” while Corocotta derives from three sources: the name of a famous Iberian bandit; *caro cocta*, which means “cooked meat”; and a Plinian beast, a cross between a hyena

72. Alvaro d’Ors, ed., “*Testamentum Porcelli*: introduccion, texto, traduccion, y notas,” *Suplementos de Estudios classicos: Serie de textos* 3 (1953): 73–83. I key my citations to the paragraph numbers of d’Ors, an edition I thank Martha Bayless for recommending to me. A Latin text of the *Testamentum* is also available in several places online.

73. On Jerome’s allusions, see Edward Champlin, “The Testament of the Piglet,” *Phoenix* 41 (1987): 176. See the preface to the twelfth book of his commentary on Isaiah (*PL* 24: 410C–D), where Jerome complains that schoolchildren prefer the *Testamentum* to Plato’s *Timaeus* (note that Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* [Philadelphia: J. Wiley, 1850], III.1, 424, translates and repeats Jerome’s complaint without attribution). In *Contra Rufinus* I.17 (*PL* 23: 412A), Jerome insults Rufinus by likening his popularity to that of the *Testamentum*; he goes on to refer to Rufinus by the nickname “Grunnius.”

74. To track down animal testaments, I relied initially on the list in Jean-Jacques Aubert, “Du lard ou du cochon? The *Testamentum porcelli* as a Jewish Anti-Christian Pamphlet,” in *A Tall Order: Writing the Social History of the Ancient World. Essays in Honor of William V. Harris*, ed. Jean-Jacques Aubert and Zsuzsanna Árhelyi (Munich: K. G. Sauer, 2005), 119–21. As much as I admire Aubert’s prodigious research into the *Testamentum*’s legal and linguistic particulars, I find his argument for its being a Jewish satire of Christianity unconvincing. For additional animal testaments, see Edward Wilson, “The Testament of the Buck and the Sociology of the Text,” *The Review of English Studies* 45 (1994): 165–66, who cites the fifteenth-century “Testament de la Mule Barbeau” of Henri Baude and the “Testament of the Papyngo” by the sixteenth-century Scottish poet David Lyndsey. For still more, see Ziolkowski, *Talking Animals: Medieval Latin Beast Poetry, 750–1150*.

and a lion.⁷⁵ Hyenas themselves were notorious for their gender bimorphism and for luring people to their deaths by imitating human speech. Grunnius's name, then, does not so much identify him as overload him with multiple, contradictory identifications; he is at once a criminal human, a cooked pig, and a hybridized, anthropophagous master of speech. Nor does the joke that Grunnius dictates his will, "quoniam manu mea scribere non potui" (since I cannot write with my hand; 2) identify him as being only animal: even lacking a hand, he can be a legal agent, and while pigs cannot write, neither could most fourth-century humans, or in fact, most humans during the time of the greatest production of *Testamentum* manuscripts.

Despite all this, the cook will kill and serve him. Grunnius's will itself colludes in this violence. The fodder he promises to his family will fatten them for slaughter, while his bequeathal of his own body parts acknowledges and encourages his own butchery and the butchery of all pigs, since the fulfillment of the will requires that Grunnius not only die, but also be butchered. Finally, the names of the witnesses to the will—"Lardio," "Ofellicus," "Cyminatus," "Lucanicus," "Tergillus," "Celsinus," and "Nuptialicus"—all pun on pork products, mainly various kinds of sausage. Because the witnesses enter into their public role as food, they confirm that a pig, even one that can be recognized as having legal rights, is ultimately meant only for human appetites; Grunnius recognizes this simply by accepting these very edible pigs as his legal peers. The *Testamentum*'s emphasis on the propriety and necessity of slaughter suggests a final resolution of Grunnius's ambiguity. As an edible animal, a pig should be subject to the dictates of human appetite, and a butcher should be indifferent to the personal interests of the animal he slaughters. The deaths of pigs should not witness to porcine responsibility, but to their instrumentality, to their being only for humans. Through this relationship, animals are made to play a function that makes them animal. Yet before Grunnius writes his will, the cook has already decreed his execution: "veni huc, euersor domi, soliuertiator, fugitiue porcelle, et hodie tibi dirimo vitam" (come here, homewrecker, rooter, fugitive piglet: today I interrupt your life; 3). Causally linking the pig's death to its crimes, the cook identifies Grunnius as subject to a criminal, that is, a human law. By killing Grunnius, the cook engages in two antithetical practices: one

75. Grunnius's name has been explained in G. Anderson, "The Cognomen of M. Grunnius Corocotta: A Dissertantiuncula on Roast Pig," *American Journal of Philology* 101 (1980): 58, which translates the name as "Grunter Boarman-Roastpig, Esq"; see also Aubert, "Testamentum," 113; D. C. Braund, "Coracottas: Bandit and Hyena," *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 5 (1980): 13–14; Champlin, "Testament of the Piglet," 179; and David Daube, *Roman Law: Linguistic, Social and Philosophical Aspects* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1969), 77.

in which to execute a pig is to treat it to legal procedures to which an animal should not be entitled, and one in which a legally recognized criminal is to be butchered and consumed. There can be only a false, temporary resolution. Grunnius is killed, but because the purpose and meaning of his death are never perfectly resolved, neither is his nature.⁷⁶

The joke of the *Testamentum* should work through a human identification with the cook, the agent of the social order, the character who knows what an animal should be. Alternately, the joke may work by mocking pig and cook both, since a testamentary pig is as ridiculous as a cook who grants a pig leave to write a will. Grunnius is not, however, on the outside of the *Testamentum* as a ludicrous object. He is a speaking subject, the primary speaker of the work. Because nearly the whole of the work is the will itself, simply reading it gives Grunnius a voice again, although it is undecidable whether this is the voice of a living pig writing his will or of a dead pig speaking to his heirs. Reading is also a bodily activity. Humans who participate in the joke of the *Testamentum* therefore must embody the victim as a speaking, legal, but still edible subject, indeterminately human, indeterminately pig, and indeterminately alive. Muddled so, the human becomes not only a pig, but also corocotta, hyena, another of Grunnius's selves, the creature whose impersonation of human voices lures humans to their deaths. To what end does the human reader of the *Testamentum* lend a voice to a treacherous hyena? The reader, polluted by its own act of imagination, speaks as a human, as an anthropophagous hybrid, and as edible talking flesh in which eater and eaten, in which *corpus* and *porcus*, remain indistinguishable. As Grunnius Corocotta, the human must be the agent of its own destruction: by giving voice and body to the pig, by becoming a willing accomplice to its own predation by a hyena, and also, finally, by recognizing that even killing and eating the talking pig offers no sure way out of this confusion. Forced to this knowledge, the human evicts itself from the certainties of its distinctiveness. Its home has been wrecked by a butcher and pig, always present, with and through whom it recalls that what distinguishes human from animal is neither speech nor species, but who holds the knife and who, or what, suffers it, and whose voice is heard as the law, and whose heard, if at all, even through its blood, only as a joke.

76. Fable 30 in Avianus, *Fables*, ed. and trans. Françoise Gaide (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1980), 110–12, a collection contemporary to the *Testamentum* and far more widespread in the Middle Ages (Mann, *From Aesop to Reynard*, 6–7), lends itself to similar treatment. In it, a boar repeatedly breaks into a garden, and on each successive day, a servant “punishes” the boar by slicing off part of its body. Finally, the servant “executes” the boar before having it served to his master, whose favorite meal is boar’s heart.

IV.

Butchers

This morning's collection contains the photograph of what might be a man's body, or a woman's; it is so mutilated that it might, on the other hand, be the body of a pig.

—Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas*, 10-11

Though butchers cut animals from humans, butchers themselves have been generally scorned as lowlifes and feared as murderers and agents of social disruption. Contempt for butchery appears in works as early as Cicero's stoic treatise *De Officiis*, which ranks it among the most disreputable of trades, and Livy's *History of Rome* records the disdain for a public figure who, in childhood, had helped out in his father's butchery work.⁷⁷ Juvenal's sneer that "gangsters, runaway slaves, sailors, thieves, coffin-makers, butchers, and eunuch priests" frequented the *popinae*, the fast-food establishments of the classical world, marks the debased place of butchers in his social imagination by the company they kept and where they kept it.⁷⁸ In the Middle Ages, the scorn for butchers takes the peculiar form of a late-medieval genre narrating conflicts between Lent and Christmas, which at their most extreme pitted armies of sausages against armies of fish: the King of Christmas, a Bacchic figure of unrestrained appetite, led the sausages, while an emaciated figure of Lenten asceticism—sometimes gendered as a woman—led the fish. In these works, charcuterie, if not butchers themselves, threatened the body politic.⁷⁹ Inspired by the works that their own work had inspired, the butchers of late-medieval London led the misrule of Christmastide, while their rivals, the fishmongers, championed order and sober public ceremony.⁸⁰ In an insurrection in Norwich on January 25, 1443, to prevent the dismantling of Norwich's mills, the leader, John

77. References from Cicero and Livy cited from Mireille Corbier, "The Ambiguous Status of Meat in Ancient Rome," *Food and Foodways* 3 (1989): 232.

78. Cited in Justin J. Meggitt, "Meat Consumption and Social Conflict in Corinth," *Journal of Theological Studies* 45 (1994): 138.

79. For a survey of the literature of Carnival and Lent from the twelfth to the eighteenth century, see Martine Grinberg and Sam Kinser, "Les Combats de Carnaval et de Carême: Trajets d'une métaphore," *Annales* 38 (1983): 85-98. For unusually elaborate examples, see Juan Ruiz, *The Book of True Love*, ed. Anthony N. Zahareas, trans. Saralyn R. Daly (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), stanzas 1067-1224; and G. Lozinski, ed., *La Bataille de Caresme et Charnage* (Paris: H. Champion, 1933).

80. Sandra Billington, "Butchers and Fishmongers: Their Historical Contribution to London's Festivity," *Folklore* 101 (1990): 98.

Gladman, costumed himself as the King of Christmas, “trappid with smale bladders, puddyns and lynks” (decked out with small bladders, puddings, and link sausage).⁸¹ Although Gladman was not a butcher, he exploited the misrule discursively coincident with butchery both to advance the city’s political goals and, later, when threatened by the law, to cloak his crime in Shrovetide’s relaxed or inverted norms.⁸² The city of Norwich itself joined Gladman in deception by falsifying its own record of the insurrection. For the description of his puddings and sausages it substituted a description of a costume of shimmering foil, that is, a piscine representation of Lenten sobriety, as the revision carefully explained.⁸³ Neither disguise nor the forgery worked. Gladman and Norwich both were punished, because neither could protect themselves from their own misrule any more than the human can protect itself from its own unruly appetites or its reliance on butchers. Because the asceticism of Lent is the exception, not the rule, the eating practices that butchers represent and enable are normative, internal to Christian alimentary practices. To blame butchers for misrule, then, functions as another example of hypocritical deferral discussed in my previous chapter: if butchers can be regarded, however tenuously, as uniquely responsible for certain kinds of social disorder attendant upon gluttony and violence against animals, everyone else can claim innocence, putting on a fishmonger’s costume, so to speak, while gorging themselves on what butchers provide them.

As I have already intimated, butchery additionally threatens to confuse human and animal bodies, since, as the *Avowyng* showed, to “brittun” one body is much like brittuning another. Thus, in the late-antique debate poem “Judicium coci et pistoris” (Judgment of the Cook and Baker), the Baker accuses the Cook of indifferently butchering both humans and animals: “tu facis in tenebris miserum prandere Thyestem, / nescius ut Tereus cenet facis, improbe, natum” (you make poor Thyestes lunch in the dark, / you make Tereus dine on his son unawares; 53–54).⁸⁴ William Chester Jordan

81. Chris Humphrey, *The Politics of Carnival: Festive Misrule in Medieval England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 66.

82. On this event, see Norman P. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich, 1370–1532* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984), 148; and Phillipa C. Maddern, *Violence and Social Order: East Anglia, 1422–1442* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 109 and 197–203. Both Tanner and Maddern argue that Gladman’s defense is patently a lie because Gladman rode out five weeks prior to Shrove Tuesday, while Humphrey, *Politics of Carnival*, 70–73, argues that Norwich defended Gladman (and itself) from the Crown by characterizing his procession as only *akin* to a Shrovetide procession. In any case, Norwich tried to make light of Gladman’s ride as just tomfoolery and therefore politically neutral.

83. *Ibid.*, 66.

84. Edition from Barry Baldwin, *Roman and Byzantine Papers* (Amsterdam: J. C.

discovered a similar homicidal joke in the nickname, Cain, bestowed on a mid-thirteenth century butcher in Vermandois⁸⁵ presumably because of the original's fratricide rather than his equally notorious farming.⁸⁶ The *Annals* of Colmar record another such joke about the leader of one of the many pogroms of fifteenth-century Germany: "Veniens in Franckoniam carnifex Rintfleisch, id est caro bovis, nomine, qui Iudeos cepit et interfecit et eorum res disripuit violenter"⁸⁷ (there came into Frankonia the butcher [or "executioner"] named Rintfleisch, that is, "Beef," who seized and killed the Jews and violently pillaged their goods). Other texts that are practical rather than parodic or historical suggest that butchers could make good soldiers. Raymon Llull's astrological treatise asserts that someone born under the sign of Jove aspires to professions suitable to the Jovian disposition, such as tailor, painter, or any work involved with beautiful, ornamented clothes and buildings, or, also, "carnifex, venator, piscator et homo de armis, qui facit sanguinem vulnerando vel occidendo alium hominem"⁸⁸ (butcher, hunter, fisherman, and warrior, who makes blood by wounding or killing another man). Christine de Pizan makes a similar observation in her *Fais d'armes et de chevalerie*. Her source, the fourth-century *De re militari* of Vegetius, suggested that "fabros ferrarios, carpentarios, macellarios et cervorum aprorumque venatores convenit sociare militiae"⁸⁹ (it is suitable to

Gieben, 1989), 67–81. Translation from D. R. Shackleton Bailey, "Three Pieces from the 'Latin Anthology,'" *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 84 (1980): 210–17.

85. "Problems of the Meat Market of Béziers 1240–1247: A Question of Anti-Semitism," XII in William Chester Jordan, *Ideology and Royal Power in Medieval France: Kingship, Crusades, and the Jews* (Burlington: Ashgate-Variorum, 2001), 40. Jordan's observations on the link between killers of animals and killers of humans, although he makes them to a different end, accord with mine; see in particular his long note on the Latin terminology for butchers, 35 n20.

86. Medieval retellings of the first murder often efface the scriptural distinction between Cain's farming and Abel's husbandry by recasting Cain's impiety as the grudging sacrifice of the worst of his goods. Thus, in a twelfth-century French liturgical drama, Paul Aebischer, ed., *Le Mystere d'Adam (Ordo representacionis Ade)* (Geneve: Droz, 1964), Abel says to Cain, "Riches hom et mult as bestes" (You're a wealthy man and own much cattle; 655) and urges Cain to sacrifice them; in a thirteenth-century sculpture at Salisbury cathedral, both Cain and Abel offer bundles of wheat (see figure 9 and discussion in Pearl F. Braude, "'Cokkel in oure clene Corn': Some Implications of Cain's Sacrifice," *Gesta* 7 [1968]: 23).

87. Cited in Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales: The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 216.

88. Ramon Llull, *Opera Latina 17: Opera Parisiis*, ed. M. Pereira and Th. Pindl-Büchl, CCCM 79 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989), *Tractatus novus de astronomia* I.1.2, 110.

89. Vegetius, *De re militari*, I. vii, cited in Christine de Pizan, *The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyualrye*, ed. A. T. P. Byles, trans. William Caxton, EETS o. s. 189 (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), 38. For the medieval afterlife of this work and its translations, see Christopher Allmand, "The *De re militari* of Vegetius in the Middle Ages and the

conscript blacksmiths, carpenters, butchers, and hunters of deer and boar) as soldiers rather than those who served in “womanly” professions such as fishing and weaving. Christine shortens and modifies this list to include only carpenters, peasants, and butchers, perhaps eliminating huntsmen because of hunting’s importance as an entertainment to her elite audience. She further modifies her source by expanding Vegetius’s original criteria. While preserving the underlying utility of carpenters’ and villagers’ strength and hardiness, she adds that butchers are useful because they are accustomed “to shed blood and strike with an axe.”⁹⁰ Whatever else they might share with carpenters and villagers, butchers possess that supremely serviceable skill shared only by soldiers. In Christine’s formulation, conscription transforms animal butchery into retroactive anticipation of, or even practice for, the killing of humans, and the ax that had once been merely a tool becomes a weapon. Her practicality brings to light all too clearly the reasons for the unease surrounding the butchers Reintfleisch and Cain and the cook of the *Testamentum Porcelli*: if the professional boundaries between butcher and soldier are either negligible (as in the astrological considerations of Llull) or readily overcome (as in Christine’s *Fais d’armes*), the butcher as soldier or murderer may not so much transgress boundaries as demonstrate, were it not for the *cordon sanitaire* of disgust, public disorder, or humor, all of which interpassively support the human, the coterminousness of the supposedly separate categories of animal and human flesh and lives.

The story of Nicholas and the Three Clerks, originating in the eleventh century and recently reproduced in *Sweeney Todd*, is the *ne plus ultra* of the butchery discourse under discussion here. In it, three young traveling scholars are murdered and prepared as meat by their host before being resurrected by St. Nicholas.⁹¹ The twelfth-century British historian Wace twice tells the

Renaissance,” in *Writing War: Medieval Literary Responses to Warfare*, ed. Corinne Saunders, Françoise le Saux, and Neil Thomas (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004), 15–28.

90. Christine de Pizan, *Chyualrye*, 36. Note Jean de Meun’s translation modifies Vegetius only by turning his prose into octosyllabic couplets; see Jean de Meun, *L’art de chevalerie*, ed. Ulysse Robert (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1875), VII, 12.

91. For the legend’s development, see Otto Edwin Albrecht, ed., *Four Latin Plays of St. Nicholas* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1935), 36–43; Wace, *La vie de Saint Nicholas*, ed. Einar Ronsjö (Lund: Gleerup, 1942), 42–44; Charles W. Jones, *Saint Nicholas of Myra, Bari, and Manhattan: Biography of a Legend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 128–40. Albrecht disproves the still common notion (e.g., Pastoureaux, *Couleurs, images, symboles*, 265) that the story developed from a misunderstanding of images of the story of Nicholas and the three prisoners in a tower; Albrecht agrees with those who posit that this story satisfied the need for a tale about the scholars who began to wander Europe in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The story may derive from a combination of two separate elements—the murderous host and a malicious attempt to trick a guest into cannibalism—in Ovid’s story of the tyrant Lycaon; see Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I.208–37. Jones

tale in his *Vie de St Nicholas*. Many of the elements that would become common to the story are divided between the two versions. In the first (213–26), Nicholas, divinely appraised of the murder of three students, asks their host for them, and then resurrects them. In the later version, the victim is a traveling merchant rather than students, but it includes the references to barrels and meat that became the legend's usual trappings. In this latter story, the murderous innkeeper does not discover the resurrection until his victim—who himself does not remember having been murdered—wishes him a good morning: “Al matin levat si apelat / L’oste par non sil saluat” (in the morning he arose and greeted his host by name; 1131–32). The innkeeper, justifiably astonished, confesses all. Wace narrates the crime itself as follows:

Par nuit leva si l’estranglat,
 Puis les membres li detrenchat.
 Quant par peces l’out detrenché,
 En un tonel l’ad tut muscé.
 Si le salat en tel endroit
 Come char que l’om manger deit. (1103–8)

The innkeeper got up at night and strangled and dismembered [the traveling merchant]. When he had dismembered him, he hid him in a barrel to salt him like the meat that one is accustomed to [or “should”] eat.

Notably, in this version, Wace likens the merchant to “char.” Although “char” is a feminine noun, Wace continues to refer to the dismembered, salted merchant with a masculine pronoun: regardless of what has happened to him, he is still himself, which means, not meat. Moreover, since the merchant has been preserved only “com char,” *like* meat, not meat itself, Wace marks him as not-meat: the simile compares rather than equates, preserving the differences between human bodies and edible bodies. Wace further distinguishes human flesh from animal meat with the phrase “char deit manger” (the meat that one should eat), which can be interpreted as both indexical, pointing to customary meat, and jussive, forbidding anthropophagy. Wace characterizes the slaughter of the merchant both as a crime and as a category violation, so that the merchant is not dehumanized; that said, Wace never explains on what basis he distinguishes between customary and improper meats.

The basis for that distinction in Wace may indeed be one only of custom:

further argues that the story developed from both hymnology, 136–37, and from the allusion in liturgy to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, 138–39, and notes that several other saints, including Menas and George, resurrect people murdered by innkeepers.

because humans are not usually eaten, their flesh can be only *like* meat. The customary distinction, at least in this story, became increasingly fragile over the next few centuries, since the clerks were murdered and cooked recurrently, in church painting and sculpture, and, of course, in other hagiography. One such reiteration of the story appears in the *South English Legendary* (hereafter *SEL*), a Middle English hagiographic collection.⁹² The *SEL* differs from Wace, among other ways, in the murderer's profession: in Wace and other early versions of the story, the murderer was a private citizen or sometimes an innkeeper, which explains why the scholars sought accommodation from him. But by at least the fifteenth century, the murderer was almost invariably identified as a butcher,⁹³ as in one mid-fifteenth-century English carol:

He (Nicholas) reysyd thre klerks from deth to lyfve,
That wern in salt put ful swythe,
Be-twiyx a bochere and his wyfve,
And was hid in privyte.⁹⁴

Nicholas raised the three clerks from death to life, who had been put in salt without delay, by a butcher and wife, and who were hid away secretly.

By the later Middle Ages, what may have started as a story about the dangers of travel, or perhaps even about the dangers of transacting relationships through the anonymous and abstract medium of money, became a story about the dangers of eating and of the shared vulnerability of human and animal, particularly pig, flesh.⁹⁵ The victims still wander, but they might

92. Edited in Wace, *St. Nicholas ein altfranzösisches Gedicht des zwölften Jahrhunderts aus Oxforder Handschriften*, ed. Nicolaus Delius (Bonn: H. B. König, 1850), 92–95. The manuscript, identified by Albrecht, *St. Nicholas*, 33 n83, is Cambridge, Bodleian MS Bodley 779 (c. 1400–1450), which has many stories, such as this one, told in no other witness of the *SEL*: see Manfred Görlach, *The Textual Tradition of the South English Legendary* (Leeds: University of Leeds School of English, 1974), 75–77.

93. Albrecht, *St. Nicholas*, 34.

94. Richard Leighton Greene, ed., *The Early English Carols* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), Carol #316, 218, which Greene dates to the fifteenth century. The stanza relating this story is unusual (as is the stanza on the miracle of Nicholas saving a pig-thief, which Greene remarks, 410, that he found recorded nowhere else), since Middle English hagiography tends to omit it. Joel Fredell, “The Three Clerks and St. Nicholas in Medieval England,” *Studies in Philology* 92 (1995): 181–202, a deeply researched study, ascribes the unpopularity of this miracle in written sources to its somewhat subversive association with the “Boy Bishop” ceremonies.

95. For discussion of early modern (and following) discursive links between butchers, children, and pigs, see Fabre-Vassas, *The Singular Beast* (see 186 for the Nicholas legend in

be thought now to wander like pigs, subject even to various thirteenth- and fourteenth-century London laws that made foraging pigs eligible to be eaten by anyone who captured them.⁹⁶ The victims still die, but while on a twelfth-century font at Winchester Cathedral, the murder threatens the clerks with the blade of his ax, on a late fourteenth-century altarpiece from Ingham, Norfolk, the murderer threatens them with his ax's blunt side. The latter method is precisely that used to stun a pig before killing it, as depicted, for example, in f. 82v of the early-fourteenth-century Queen Mary Psalter, produced in London:⁹⁷ their death is no longer simply a murder, but, at the very least in technique, a slaughter.

The *SEL* version begins "on a tyne thre clerkis com wandry in a street / of hongred and ful sore athirst" (once upon a time, three clerks were wandered in a street, suffering much from hunger and thirst); the clerks plead with the butcher to board them ("her out that we ne sterue"); and then, all

particular). See, for example, the seventeenth-century version in George Doncieux and Julien Tiersot, eds., *Le romancéro populaire de la France: choix de chansons populaires françaises* (Paris: É. Bouillon, 1904), 379, "les a coupés tout par morceaux, / mis au saloir comme pouceaus" ([the butcher] cut them [viz., "trois petits enfants"] up into pieces and put them in the salting tub as if they were pigs).

96. For laws concerning wandering pigs, see Riley, *Liber albus*, 228; Corporation of London, *Memorials of London and London Life, in the XIIIth, XIVth, and XVth centuries . . . 1276–1419*, ed. and trans. Henry Thomas Riley (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1868), 28.

97. For reproductions of the font and altarpiece see Fredell, "Three Clerks," 193 and 195. For references to further medieval images, see Albrecht, *St. Nicholas*, 64–70; and for reproductions, Auguste Margaillier, *Saint Nicolas* (Paris: Laurens, 1930); Karl Meisen, *Nikolauskult und Nikolausbrauch im Abendlande* (Dusseldorf: Schwann, 1931); and Edward G. Clare, *St. Nicholas: His Legends and Iconography* (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1985). Most picture Nicholas standing before three barrels, out of which rise the naked, unmarried forms of the young scholars. For other depictions of the murderer about to stun the clerks with a heavy blow, as if they were animals about to be slaughtered, see the lower border of the fourteenth-century engraving commemorating Bishops Burchard de Serken and John de Mul, in Lübeck Cathedral (William Frederick Creeny, *A Book of Fac-Similes of Monumental Brasses on the Continent of Europe. With Brief Descriptive Notes* [Norwich: A. H. Goose & Co., 1884], 13); a thirteenth-century window at Bourges Cathedral (Meisen, fig. 136; Clare, fig. 58); and a relief at the Swiss Cathedral of St. Nicholas at Fribourg/Freiburg (Meisen, fig. 212; Clare, fig. 47): this Cathedral, incidentally, is near Metzgergasse, Butchers' Lane. For a reproduction of the Queen Mary's Psalter image, see Christopher House Woolgar, *The Great Household in Late Medieval England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 116. Note that the version of the story in Cambridge, University Library, MS Trinity College 605, f. 115v (cited in Fredell, "Three Clerks," 200), describes the murder as follows: "that ilke nyȝt wiþ a pol ax he hem gan to quelle" (that same night he killed them with a pole-ax). While it is tempting to believe the use of a pole-ax deliberately recalls animal slaughter, it seems this specific connotation is postmedieval. Per Vialles, *Animal to Edible*, 45, pigs are no longer stunned before slaughter; but this change in slaughtering practice occurred only late in the Middle Ages (see Mane, "Toujours," 447).

the while invoking the name of Saint Nicholas, they eat and go to sleep: the *SEL*'s unusual emphasis on the carnal appetites of the clerks already load them with a certain porcine quality, given the notorious gluttony of pigs (as in a fourteenth-century preacher's handbook produced in England, which describes the god of gluttony as having "the head of a pig, for just as a pig pokes its head and snout into everything, even the garbage, so gluttons want to try everything").⁹⁸ In the night, the butcher murders them with an ax and, as is usual, discovers that the clerks have nothing worth stealing, nothing, that is, but their bodies. After slaughtering the clerks, the butcher does not just hide the victims in a salting barrel, but agrees to his wife's suggestion that the corpses be made into "pastis and pyus . . . for pork hy cholleth ben solde" (pasties and pies . . . they should be sold as pork). The butcher announces that he is selling three pennies' worth of pies for the price of one ("for on peny ich wolde yeue, for hanseles sake, / that is worth to other thre, whoso hit wolde take"), virtually completing the transformation of clerks into pies, and murder into pig butchery: "virtually," because the interpassivity of the *humanity* of human flesh must be recalled. The full completion of the clerks' murder into a slaughter and butchery would require that they lose the interpassive support through which they are sustained as human by being (mis)recognized as having become edible flesh; they are saved from this fate, of course, simply by having this story told about them. Yet they are still in danger, for the loss of their support very nearly occurs when Nicholas arrives with his retinue. Nicholas "axed of him what he hadde, and what to sillin wolde" (asked him what he had and what he would sell), and the butcher "answered baldeliche, pasties and pyes he hadde / and good chep" (boldly answered that he had pasties and pies, and that for cheap); he then intensifies his pitch, "and swythe loud he gradde / for a peny that is worth to. to the ich wele selle / lok nouthe wher hit be gret chep. by hem yif thou wille" (and he cried out very loudly, "I will sell two pennies' worth to you for one. You can't find it this cheap anywhere else. Buy them if you like!"); Nicholas then responds with the following demand:

hastou any other flesch. telle swythe anon
 for ich wold ther of bigge. wel swythe gret won
 of bacon that were fair and clene. fain ich wolden habbe
 sel me so wel as thou wost. and nought that thou ne gabbe
 other flesch nab ich non. tha thou sext her to sille
 yis for soth hastou. bakis thre ich wene
 that liggeth isilt ther in thy fate . . .

98. Siegfried Wenzel, ed. and trans., *Fasciculus morum: A Fourteenth-Century Preacher's Handbook* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), 631.

do and bringe me ther to. yif hit thin wille be
for my wil is of hem to bigge.⁹⁹

“Do you have any other flesh? Answer quickly, for I would buy from you a great deal of fair and clean bacon. I would gladly have this. Sell me as good meat as you know of. And don’t lie.” “I have no other flesh except for what you see here for sale.” “Yes, in truth, you do have [more meat/better meat]. I believe you have baked three that lay salted there in your vat . . . bring me there, if it is your will, for it is my will to buy them.”

The butcher and his wife confess and cry for mercy, and Nicholas resurrects the clerks.

By coming to the clerks’ assistance, describing their flesh as “so wel as thou wost,” and resurrecting them, Nicholas rescues them from having been treated as animals. Although Nicholas’s desire for delicious flesh brings him perilously close to dissolving a distinction between human and animal that was, because of what the clerks suffered, already under threat, he has also recognized the clerks—to recall Butler—as “grievable lives,” as he would have never done for a pig. Furthermore, he has elevated the delicious flesh of the dead clerks above the common run of meat, so preserving a remainder of the human in the clerkly flesh itself, namely its inherent superiority to other meats. All would seem to have been made right had Nicholas’s request not gone variously awry. He asks for the clerks as “other flesch,” which at once distinguishes human flesh from, to recall Wace, “char deit manger,” and includes the clerks’ within the whole catalog of meats, differentiated only as varieties of edible flesh: to recall Innocent III’s letter to the anthropophagous father, quoted in my third chapter, the clerks may simply belong among “de caetero carnibus.” The request may indicate not so much concern as gustatory preference: “clean bacon” rather than cooked pies, human rather than pork, suggesting an epicure’s complicity rather than a saint’s disgust.

Nicholas’s preservation of the clerks goes awry, too, because of his reference to the clerks as the “thre” rather than as the “thre clerks,” and his request for “other flesh” after the butcher’s initial pitch of the clerks to him as pies. The reference to the “thre” would seem a minor point were the omission not repeated in another version of the tale, a fourteenth-century French *Vie Saint Nicholas* that similarly declares that the butcher had “trois en une auge bien salez”¹⁰⁰ (three, well-salted, in a barrel). With this admittedly tenu-

99. Ellipses in the original.

100. Kurt K. Rudolf Bohnstedt, ed., *Vie Saint Nicholas, altfranzösisches gedicht* (Erlangen: Junge und Sohn, 1897), stanza 132. It does not resolve the identity of this “trois” until Nicholas resurrects the clerks.

ous support, I will not discount the vague “thre” as the result of metrical exigencies or as evidence of authorial ineptness, but will argue that it should be interpreted, along with Nicholas’s otiose order. In neither case does Nicholas refer to the clerks directly or clearly. The “thre” and Nicholas’s misleading order suggest a textual inability, or refusal, to determine what or even where the clerks are between slaughter and resurrection, whether they are corpses, carcasses, pies, or all of these things at once. It suggests, as well, a refusal to recognize that the clerks have been treated like meat, a refusal to recognize them, that is, as anything but clerks. Wace tried to preserve the humanity of his merchant by calling him only “com char,” but the very fact of his intervention indicates how easy it is to treat, or to recognize, humans as meat; the intervention of the *SEL*’s misdirection indicates the same thing, although in more dire circumstances, because the murderer is a butcher rather than an innkeeper. Like the tale tradition as a whole, the *SEL* cannot help suggesting that to be fattened—as the clerks were when the butcher fed them—slaughtered, pickled, and cooked turns a person into, or reveals a person as, nothing more than “other flesh,” and that what saves the clerks from this animalizing fate is not their inherent humanity, but the desire of the other, in this case Nicholas, for their delicious flesh. No wonder the *SEL* hides the clerks from the direct view of the text while they are pies; but its furtive efforts to conceal the interpassivity of the human subject hide nothing. The furtiveness instead announces the presence of a secret; it gives up the secret, and what the secret wants to hide, the presence of narrative content too traumatic to relate directly: that all that saves human flesh from being “char” and not only “com char” is Nicholas’s recognition. Nicholas’s misleading requests therefore point away from the clerks, but they also point to an uncanny, incognizable remnant in the story that renders the permeability between clerk and mere meat and murder and butchery far more disturbing than it would have been had the *SEL* made an overt, sure determination.

In chapter 3, I discussed Guibert of Nogent’s advocacy for the human consumption of even mother birds. In essence, his advocacy asked what the human would be without butchery. So too with the royal butchery of the *Avowynge of Arthur*, and, in a negative form, with Chaucer’s “The Former Age,” the Mohammad myth, and the story of Jesus and the Jewish children. But the butchers of the Nicholas story, the *Testamentum Porcelli*, and Christine de Pizan might just as well have served their customers *as* meat as served meat to them. Thus Guibert’s question also might be, how can the human protect itself when it requires butchers? For humans seem to retain their human privileges—and perhaps their humanity—only so long as they keep themselves safe from the butchers whose very labors are at the center of the human community.

V.

Conclusion: Blood in the River

In his “Licit and Illicit Trades in the Medieval West,” Jacques Le Goff speaks of the persistence into the Middle Ages of what he calls the “old taboos of primitive societies,” among which is a “blood taboo” encompassing executioners and butchers. As he remarks, “the sanguinary medieval West seems to have oscillated between relish and horror of the blood it spilled.”¹⁰¹ The butchery regulations of late-medieval London emblemize the dynamic Le Goff describes. London wanted meat, but in 1273 or 1274, the Mayor of London ejected both butchers and fishmongers from the Chepe so that “no refuse might be found remaining in Chepe on the arrival of his lordship the King.”¹⁰² Some thirty years later, four women in East Chepe were charged with polluting the King’s highway with blood and offal and were commanded to dispose of the waste products in the Thames at ebb tide.¹⁰³ A 1333 law decreed that animals not be slaughtered in the street and that entrails be sold on side lanes rather than main streets in order “to preserve a clean and decent way for magnates, for the honor of the City.”¹⁰⁴ In 1371, Edward III demanded that beasts be slaughtered outside the city either at Knightsbridge or Stratford; his demand may have had little effect, for in 1380, the citizens of London, repeating the King’s order, themselves asked that butchers confine slaughter to Knightsbridge.¹⁰⁵ In 1391, John of Gaunt, the Bishops of Lincoln and Ely, and various other elites complained of the “nuisance caused by the slaughter of animals near Holbournbrigge;

101. Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 59. For evidence for the continued currency of the biases Le Goff characterizes (no doubt disparagingly) as primitive, see Paul Rozin and April E. Fallon, “A Perspective on Disgust,” *Psychological Review* 94 (1987): 28.

102. Henry Thomas Riley, trans., *Chronicles of the Mayors and Sheriffs of London, A.D. 1188 to A. D 1274* (London: Trübner, 1863), 173. Caroline M. Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People, 1200–1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 23, gives 1274 as the date for this event, which seems more likely, as Edward I returned to England from Crusade that year: see Michael Prestwich, *Edward I*, rev. ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 85.

103. Sabine, “Butchering in Mediaeval London,” 340.

104. Philip E. Jones, *The Butchers of London: A History of the Worshipful Company of Butchers of the City of London* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1976), 70. The distinction between meat (food derived from the muscles attached to bones) and offal described in Alan Beardsworth and Teresa Keil, *Sociology on the Menu: An Invitation to the Study of Food and Society* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 194, seems operative in this treatment of offal as something midway between waste and meat.

105. Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, 263.

[and they demanded] that thenceforth no butcher deposit filth within one mile of the City and suburbs.”¹⁰⁶ In 1392, Richard II also demanded that animals not be slaughtered in the city, but this time the citizens complained of the increased price of meat caused by higher transportation costs. Their complaint had results: animal slaughter returned to the city, but it could be performed only under certain complicated conditions. According to the record of the *Liber Albus*, to dispose of entrails—presumably those that were unsold—butchers were to bring them to a special house “in a decent manner,” cut them into small pieces “according to the size used in the City of old time, put [them] into boats [to be] taken to midstream where the river was deepest, and cast into the water when the tide began to ebb, but not between the Palace of Westminster and the Tower.”¹⁰⁷ The *Liber Albus* likewise demanded that pigs be slaughtered indoors.¹⁰⁸ The year 1488 saw the reenactment of another law intended to prevent the sight of offal from offending the city’s noble and clerical magnates.¹⁰⁹

The laws decreed that animal slaughter be hidden away; meat (and sometimes offal), once separated from the carcass, would be sold and consumed, to be hid away in human bodies; slaughter’s inedible excess would be disposed of to ensure that it too would disappear, at least from the view of as many people as possible and especially from that of magnates. No other food trade was restricted to such covert production, vending, or disposal, or was regarded as septic. Given the foulness of butchery waste, hygienic explanations for the laws should not be discounted, especially since Edward

106. Reginald Sharpe, ed., *Calendars of the Letters of the City of London: H—1375–1399* (London: City of London, 1907), 372.

107. Jones, *Butchers of London*, 80. See also Sharpe, *Letter Book H*, 392, which requires that a latrine on the bank of Thames owned by Robert de Parys be removed and a house built “for the use of butchers, where they may cut up their offal and take it in boats to midstream and cast it into the water at ebb-tide; and further than all filth, &c., on either side of the river between the Palace of Westminster and the Tower be removed before Pentecost next.”

108. Riley, *Liber albus*, 270.

109. Jones, *Butchers of London*, 81. For another city’s laws, see Auguste Pleindoux, *Le Commerce de la boucherie et l’inspection des viandes dans le Département de Vaucluse autrefois et aujourd’hui* (Avignon: Rullière, 1925), 18, which cites a medieval law of Avignon that forbade butchers from slaughtering or butchering animals except in the places designated by the authorities; and William Montorsi, ed., *Statuta Ferrariae, anno MCCLXXXVII* (Ferrara: Cassa di risparmio di Ferrara, 1955), 2.2999, where elites of Ferrara restricted butcher shops to certain places along the Po (similarly, see *Statuti del Comune di Padova, dal secolo XII all’anno 1285* [Padua: F. Sacchetto, 1873], 278–80). More generally, see Pleij, *Dreaming of Cockaigne: Medieval Fantasies of the Perfect Life*, 142; and François Desportes, “Food Trades,” in Jean Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari, *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*, Albert Sonnenfeld, translation editor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 284, who both speak of the tendency of medieval urban legislation to demand a concealment of butchery.

III blamed the plague on the stench of slaughtered meat;¹¹⁰ certainly the laws evidence disgust, both at butchery waste and at the slaughter of animals. Nonetheless, the compulsion to hide butchery from sight, particularly from the sight of elites, suggests that butchery excited more concern than can be accounted for by the desire for urban sanitation; nor can the laws simply be understood as a practical response to hygienic concerns. While it may be hygienic to dispose of butchery waste carefully, only a symbolic hygienic argument justifies the requirement that animals' slaughter and the sale of entrails be limited to side streets or the indoors. The laws' repetition is evidence of judicial ineffectiveness; alternately, the repetition is evidence of legislation as an end in itself: it was not just that butchery was disgusting, but also that lawmakers wished to make it known that they found butchery disgusting. Elites never gave up meat-eating or patronizing the trade that fed their appetite, but by repeatedly performing disgust, they could absolve themselves of complicity in the various dangers—to the civic order, to other people, and to the human itself—that are attendant upon butchery.

Butchery materially enacts the divinely ordained privilege of being human. Through routine violence against animals, butchers produce not only meat but also the clearest proof of the human domination over—and therefore distinction from—animals. Yet at the same time, butchers mutilate bodies that, as blood, flesh, viscera, and bones, resemble the bodies of humans. As has been seen, butchery did not lose sight of this similarity. Far from it. No profession shows more clearly that the human is an effect, not a cause of, animal subjugation, that what distinguishes human from animal is that executioners and soldiers kill humans, and butchers animals, that humans are buried and animals eaten or discarded. The texts and practices considered in this and the previous chapter share an effort to deflect, conceal, or quarantine violence against animals, even when, or especially when, the text or practice promotes the subjugation of animals as divine right or the key to defining the human. Though Ratramnus's cynocephali need to subjugate animals to prove their humanity, Ratramnus absolves them of their "gentle" domination by deflecting the violence onto the "bestial," "fierce" animals themselves. Chrétien sharply contrasts the Wild Herdsman's violence—tyrannical and untechnological, but foundational—to the noble violence of knights who would never have to engage, at least overtly, in the routine domination of animals to prove their human selfhood. In "Ante Cibus," Prudentius praises the divine gift to humans of the domination of the animal world and presents humans as farmers or even domestic herbivores terrifying wolves and eagles; yet by characterizing some slaughter as barbaric, he

110. Corporation of London, *Memorials of London*, 355–56.

forbids his Christian subjects the untrammelled exercise of their God-given dominion. To conceal the practices and byproducts of butchery in the law, and to conceal or deflect the operations and effects of butchery in stories, is symptomatic of the desire to claim a “good conscience” for oneself and to establish a self-sustaining, essential human identity that need not be enacted on animals. Under the butchery laws, Londoners were meant to encounter animals as meat, stripped of inedible excess, cut up or already baked into pies. For the most part, Londoners simply did not see the violence needed to turn the animals into food, or, if they did, they imagined that they were seeing a violation of the law, an eruption of something alien and repulsive, rather than their own abyssal foundationless human selfhood.

In *Yvain*, The Herdsman boasts, “ne nus ne s’i porroit fier, / fors moi, s’entre’eles s’estoit mis, / que maintenant ne fust ochis. / Ainsi sui de mes bestes sire” (No one except me could have confidence among them, for he would be killed at once. Thus I am lord of my beasts; 352–55). This declaration attests to the Herdsman’s great strength and ferocity, though the joke is on him, for elites such as Calogrenant would disdain mastering animals because of the lowliness of the task. After all, knights kill noble beasts and hunt or go to war with their dogs and horses, while peasants slaughter livestock and labor with draft animals. While a peasant can kill an animal, only a knight can be victorious over one, and when knights kill animals, proving their humanity is only incidental to their overt purpose of proving their worth as knights: emblematically, when Yvain hunts with his lion, and especially when he encounters the lion and dragon fighting and saves the lion, in electing to succor the “beste gentil et franche” (noble and honorable beast; 3375), he demonstrates his nobility. The joke nonetheless turns again. Elites can no more be herdsman than they can butchers, because to do either would be to admit the job’s importance. They would have to admit that Calogrenant’s fight to establish himself as grievable had already been won by the Herdsman’s fists.

EPILOGUE



*“Rabbits Bunnies
Pets or Meat
For Sale”*

—Sign by Rhonda Britton in *Roger & Me*¹

Hospitality is the deconstruction of the at-home; deconstruction is hospitality to the other, to the other than oneself, the other than ‘its other,’ to an other who is beyond any “its other.”

—Jacques Derrida, “Hostipitality.”²

I.

The Noise of Animals in the Last Days

Up to this point, I have argued that the relationship of humans to animals is irreducibly, necessarily violent. But where was the violence when Edward I of England sent his sick falcons on pilgrimage?³ In the wax images of animals left at Exeter cathedral as offerings pleading for the miraculous cure

1. Michael Moore, *Roger and Me* (Dog Eat Dog Films, 1989).

2. Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, 264.

3. See Robin S. Oggins, “Falconry and Medieval Views of Nature,” in Joyce E. Salisbury, ed., *The Medieval World of Nature: A Book of Essays* (New York: Garland, 1993), 50. For many more instances of raptors as recipients of prayers, including those in which a specially prepared coin was bent over the bird’s head, follow the references listed in Benjamin Byerly and Catherine Ridder Byerly, eds., *Records of the Wardrobe and Household, 1285–1286* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1977), xxxix n9, for example, 232, item #2239, “Eidem pro oblatione ad feretrum Sancti Thome Cant’ pro eodem girfalcone, iiij d.”

of horses?⁴ In the promise of an offering made to Saint Thomas Cantilupe if he cured a pet dormouse?⁵ In the many medieval encomia for dogs? Thierry (or Theodorich), an eleventh-century abbot of St. Trond, laments that he can offer no memorial besides a poem for the dog Pitulus, which inspired love in all who met it—"Quisquis te vidit, quisquis te novit, amavit" (Whoever saw you, whoever knew you, loved you; 29)—and whose only "officium" (purpose) was "domino praeludere" (to play before its master; 17): Pitulus no longer occupies the purely instrumental existence to which humans typically relegated animals.⁶ Since I have argued that humans knew themselves as human by esteeming humans as more valuable than animals, what should I do about Robert de Clinton's horse, ransomed in 1360 for 13s. 4d. more than Chaucer?⁷ Or the story of Lancelot, whose patience under his tutor's blows turns to rage when the tutor beats Lancelot's hunting dog; or the stories of the knights who, having had their horses cut out from under them, wish that they had been killed instead?⁸

But violence nonetheless operates in these cases, not against the single cherished animal, but against all the rest. None of these special relationships demand that humans abandon their superiority to animals in general; none demand that humans allow themselves to become as vulnerable before animals as animals are before them; none calls for a general reverence for or reexamination of what constitutes life, human and nonhuman alike. Thierry wonders at his love for his dog, and justifies it by other literary animal epitaphs, but he never utilizes his critical engagement with burial rites to critique human particularity. Other beloved animals, such as Edward's falcons and Lancelot's dogs, helped their masters hunt and kill, as if to affirm the singularity of these bonds between human and particular animals. Similarly, when Alexander's horse died, Alexander "made grete dole for hym and weped for hym riȝt sare" (mourned greatly and wept sorely for him), then had an enormous tomb erected for the horse, around which he built a city "þe whilke in mynde of his horse he gart call Buktyphalas" (which, recall-

4. For these images, found on a ledge over the tomb of the fifteenth-century Bishop Edmund Lacey, see Ursula M. Radford, "The Wax Images Found in Exeter Cathedral," *The Antiquaries Journal* 29 (1949): Plate XX.

5. *Acta Sanctorum*, Oct. 1, 1675.

6. For the poem, see Jean Préaux, "De Culex de Virgile à son pastiche Thierry de Saint-Trond," in *Présence de Virgile, Actes du Colloque des 9, 11 et 12 décembre 1976*, ed. Raymond Chevalier (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1978), 195–57. For the English translation, see Ziolkowski, *Talking Animals*, 272–73.

7. Martin Crow and Claire C. Olson, eds., *Chaucer Life Records: From Materials Compiled by John M. Manly and Edith Rickert, with the Assistance of Lillian Redstone and Others* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966), 24.

8. Cohen, *Medieval Identity Machines*, 54–65.

ing his horse, he called Bucephalus);⁹ but Alexander's love for Bucephalus did nothing to dull his enthusiasm for killing humans, monsters, and other animals. Cherished animals such as these, which their human masters would have refused to eat, which were used to harm other animals and other humans, and for which humans might even have sacrificed themselves, are examples of the operations of what Jonathan Elmer and Cary Wolfe calls "the logic of the pet," which singles out a beloved one among animals as "the sole exception, the individual who is exempted from the slaughter in order to vindicate, with exquisite bad faith, a sacrificial structure."¹⁰ Consider Gawain's horse Grissell, beheaded in the *Awyntyrs of Arthur*. Gawain mourns it to the point of madness, while explaining, "But for doel of the dombe best that thus shuld be dede, / I mourne for no montur, for I may gete mare"¹¹ (except for sorrow over the mute beast that died in such a way, I'll mourn for no mount, since I can get more; 554–55). One horse, but only one, merits vengeance, sorrow, and love, while Gawain consigns other animals to the indignity of being just beasts. Encompassed within a slightly more expansive "humanism," promoted (to recall Butler) from nonlife to grievable life, the pet cannot dislodge carnophallogocentrism, or dissolve the categories of either human or animal. On the contrary: pets strengthen carnophallogocentrism by mystifying its exclusionary operations.

The logic of the pet is nowhere more obvious than in the lack of protection for other animals of the same species as the one beloved pet. Few medieval stories describe animal-human partnerships as devoted and intimate as that between the horse Bonus Amicus and the Catalan knight Guiraut

9. John Stephen Westlake, ed., *The Prose Life of Alexander, EETS o. s. 143* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1913), 9 and 107. The horse, given as a gift to Philip, Alexander's father, is kept behind iron bars in a stable. Philip confines "thefeȝ and oþer mysdoers" (thieves and other criminals) with the horse, and, when Alexander discovers it, he "saw, bifore þe horse, mens hend and fete, & oþer of þaire membris, liggand scatered here & thare" (saw, in front of the horse, men's hands and feet and other members lying scattered here and there). These elements of the Bucephalus story date to some of the earliest recorded versions of the Alexander romance, e.g., Julius Valerius's fourth-century Latin translation from the Greek, Bernard Kübler, ed., *Iuli Valeri Alexandri Polemi Res Gestae Alexandri Macedonis* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1888), 14, "sed est ei vitium beluile, namque homines edit et in huiusmodi pabulum saevit"; at 19, Alexander hears it neighing, and is unsure whether he hears a horse or a lion ("hinnitusne aures meas an vero rugitus aliquis leoninus offendit?"). The horse submits to Alexander by extending its forehooves and making conciliatory gestures ("Nam et pedes priores extenderat et gesticulam mansuetudinis luserat et supplici quodam motu blanditus est"), and all wonder at the gentleness of this beast once accustomed to eating men ("edendi homines"). For a survey of the traditions of the horse and an attempt to arrive at their historical "core," see Andrew Runni Anderson, "Bucephalus and His Legend," *The American Journal of Philology* 51 (1930): 1–21.

10. Wolfe, *Animal Rites*, 104.

11. Hahn, *Gawain*.

de Cabrera, described in Gervase of Tilbury's early-thirteenth-century *Otia Imperialia*. Apart from Bonus Amicus's superlative skill as a warhorse, it was also able to use sign language to offer Giraut "sound advice in any distress." After Guiraut was murdered, Bonus Amicus proved its great love and grief for Guiraut by "an awesome and wretched death," a suicide effected "by dashing its neck against the wall."¹² But Gervase also tells a few stories of nameless horses eaten by their human masters. In the first, a knight embarrassed by a bare larder on Mardi Gras has his steward slaughter his best horse and serve it to his guests under the guise of beef. God ensures that the knight does not suffer for his generosity or his piety, for, miraculously, the knight's unsuspecting squire later finds the same horse alive and well in the barn when he goes to tend to it. Gervase describes two other knights caught unprepared for feasts, one again for Mardi Gras, the other for Easter. Both also solve their problems by secretly serving their guests horse: the former then receives a new horse from his lord; the latter does not. While Gervase's narrative emphasizes miracles, Christian banqueting customs, and the expectations of hospitality and mutual support between knights, lords, and guests, it is also clear that he expects hippophagy—but not human carnivorousness in general—to be understood as peculiar, even distasteful. This is as far as he goes. Given the bonds between Guiraut and Bonus Amicus, Gervase might have presented hippophagy as a Thrystian feast. Instead, for Gervase, the consumption of horses is not a horror, but only an act of desperation, as at the sieges of Carham in Wark in 1138 and of Rochester in 1215,¹³ or at the siege of Acre in the romance *Richard Coer de Lyon*, or at the badly planned holidays in the *Otia Imperialia*. In all these cases, love for horses, like that for any animal, finally gives way to human self-love.

Nor were pets or other beloved animals released from their anthropocentric orbits. Notably, the animals I cited above are remembered not in themselves, nor for their relationships with other animals, but only for their relationships with humans. These relationships sometimes do attest to the nobility of the animals, as with Bonus Amicus, but this nobility in turn honors the humans, who are the stories' true heroes. Certainly, to the degree that love for pets establishes a relationship between human and animal that is not strictly utilitarian, it suggests a model for humans to be with animals in which humans no longer consign animals to being objects available for manipulation by human subjects. Love has yet another lesson, however, if read in light of Žižek's work on the uncrossable gap between the lover and the beloved, how "finding oneself in the position of the beloved

12. Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia*, 740–43.

13. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings*, 667.

is . . . violent, even traumatic: being loved makes me tangibly aware of the gap between what I am as a determinate being and the unfathomable X in me which stimulates love.”¹⁴ Žižek writes from the perspective of the subject subjected to the love of the other, but his point should also remind lovers that the beloved possesses an inaccessible surplus of subjecthood, an “unfathomable X,” inaccessible to either beloved or lover. This is as true for the human love of animals as for the love of other humans: however much the owner loves the pet, there remains an unfathomable, inexhaustible selfhood in the pet exceeding the bounds of ownership. The very insatiability and constitutive incompleteness of love attests to the nonanthropocentric particularity of animal existence, and should attest to this incompleteness not as love’s frustration but as its possibility. There is always something more.

At least one medieval literary tradition engages directly with the inaccessible plenitude of animal subjecthood by acknowledging that neither human love nor need can fully comprehend animal existence.¹⁵ This tradition, the Fifteen Signs of the Last Judgment, was enormously popular; more than 180 Latin examples survive, as do versions in English, French, German, Armenian, Spanish, Hebrew, and Old Frisian, among other vernaculars.¹⁶ William Heist’s landmark study sorted the examples of the tradition into groups—the Damian, pseudo-Bede, Comestor, Anglo-Norman, and Voragine—according to the sequence of the events they narrate, among other criteria, and traced them to several wellsprings: Ezekiel 38:20, 2 Esdras, and the Irish *Saltair na Rann*, which expands on the eschatological list of the Apocalypse of Thomas.¹⁷ Whatever the differences between the groups, all describe the

14. Žižek, *Parallax View*, 355.

15. My concentration on animals does not mean I am implicitly asserting the exhaustibility of other kinds of things, whether stones, stars, or even ideas; for a rich reading of such things, see Harman, *Prince of Networks*.

16. William Watts Heist, *The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday* (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1952) is the benchmark study of the tradition; for an early study rich in primary texts, see Georg Nölle, “Die Legende von Den Fünfzehn zeichen vor dem Jüngsten Gerichte,” *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 6 (1879): 413–76. Concetta Giliberto, “The Fifteen Signs of Doomsday of the First Riustring Manuscript,” in *Advances in Old Frisian Philology*, ed. Rolf H. Bremmer, Jr., Stephen Laker, and Oebele Vries (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 129–52, is a good recent treatment.

17. See 2 Esdras [4 Ezra] 4–7: “But if the most High grant thee to live, thou shalt see after the third trumpet that the sun shall suddenly shine again in the night, and the moon thrice in the day. And blood shall drop out of wood, and the stone shall give his voice, and the people shall be troubled. And even he shall rule, whom they look not for that dwell upon the earth, and the fowls shall take their flight away together. And the Sodomitish sea shall cast out fish, and make a noise in the night, which many have not known: but they shall all hear the voice thereof”; for a relevant section of the *Saltair na Rann*, see Heist, *Fifteen Signs*, 4, “beasts, sea monsters will roar; / they will raise harsh cries. / Ugly lamenting, weeping, / wailing without

woes occurring on each of the last fifteen days prior to God's destruction of the world and his final sorting of humans into the saved and the damned. In these days, all of creation dreads the end: "Tote rien serra en tristesse" (everything will be in sadness; 1102), as the French *Le Mystère d'Adam* has it.¹⁸ Stars fall from the sky and "run about the earth like lightning," stones do battle, humans panic, everyone dies, and then, on the last day, the humans resurrect. The tradition tends to pay particular attention to the reactions of fish and other animals, to how, in their frenzy, they fight each other, and especially to how they cry out to the heavens. In these representative passages from *The Golden Legend*, "the sea beasts will come out above the surface and will roar to the heavens," birds will congregate silently, trembling with fear of God's arrival, and eventually all beasts will gather in the fields, "growling and grunting, not feeding, nor drinking."¹⁹

The system of the human grants animals no reason, no responsibility, and therefore no capacity for either sin or virtue. Only humans will be judged in the last days, while animals, the detritus of a feeble world on the verge of destruction, mourn only because the world itself is dying. Understood in this way, the Fifteen Signs tradition, even in its attention to animals, is as typically anthropocentric as works such as Honorius of Autun's *Elucidarium*, discussed in my third chapter, which argues that animal suffering serves no purpose but "to torment man in his soul" by reminding humans of their own sinfulness and how it debilitated the world. So too in several examples of the Fifteen Days: Ava, a twelfth-century German poet of sacred history, explains that "on the twelfth day, the beasts of the field help us lament";²⁰ the Middle

music—harsh their shrieks—/ without joy, without control, / at the four corners of the earth" (Heist trans.); note that the Apocalypse of Thomas has nothing about animals in it but does predict that the abyss "mugebit" (sic; will bellow); see editions in Charles D. Wright, "The Apocalypse of Thomas: Some New Latin Texts and their Significance for the Old English Versions," in *Apocryphal Texts and Traditions in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. Kathryn Powell and Donald G. Scragg (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2003), 27–64.

18. Aebischer, *Le Mystere d'Adam*.

19. Jacobus de Voragine, *Golden Legend*, Vol. 1, 8. See also pseudo-Bede, "On the fourth day the fishes and all the sea monsters will both gather together upon the waters and give forth voices and groans, whose meaning no one knows but God" (trans. Heist, *Fifteen Signs*, 25; for this passage in a modern edition of pseudo-Bede, see Martha Bayless and Michael Lapidge, eds., *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae* [Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1998], 178). Note that Aquinas, ST SS q. 73 art. 1, "Whether any signs will precede the Lord's coming to judgment," answers yes, lists the fifteen last signs, but then adds, "The signs mentioned by Jerome [a typical ascription] are not asserted by him; he merely says that he found them written in the annals of the Hebrews: and, indeed, they contain very little likelihood."

20. Ava, *Ava's New Testament Narratives: "When the Old Law Passed Away,"* trans. James A. Rushing, Jr. (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute, 2003).

English *Saint Jeremie's Fifteen Tokens before Doomsday* likewise states, "Alle þe fisses þe þrid day; abouen þe water schull be, / & so reuly a cri ziuen; þat all men schullen have fere" (all the fishes on the third day shall be above the water and cry out so piteously that all men shall have fear);²¹ and another Middle English work, after first reasserting that animals exist only for human use ("The fyscheys that ther in brede, / That now men take in ther nede" [the fishes that therein breed that men now take for their needs]), explains that "Soche a forewarnyng myzt us teche, / Yf that we couth any skylle, / To take the goode and leue the ylle" (such a forewarning might teach us, if we knew any wisdom, to follow good and shun evil; 163–65).²² Such nods towards animal grief present animals as meriting only indirect concern, as in Aquinas—or Kant, for that matter:²³ the merely hermeneutic animal inspires humans to ponder their own, rational, particularly human dread at the approach of their awesome Judge. Furthermore, as I observed in my third chapter, mainstream medieval Christian resurrection doctrine implicitly held that only animals could really die; humans would suffer the humiliations of putrefaction, but would pass through death to go on to experience hell or heaven. It is the very notion of "what follows death" that distinguishes human from animal death: humans leap over death's chasm to experience eternal terror or eventual felicity on the other side; only animals fall in. Since the Fifteen Signs tradition shows both the world's end and human resurrection, the animal terror in the last days witnesses to human supremacy, as only the animals' terror is terror before an actual, final end. Animal mourning in the last days can therefore function as yet another theater for human self-knowledge and self-congratulation.

Despite all this co-opting of animal terror, a nonanthropocentric remainder, an "unfathomable X," nonetheless persists, most evidently in the animals' voices. The Middle Irish *Airdena inna Cóic Lá nDéc ria mBráth* states that "no one in the world, save the true, great, mighty God, knows what they say on that day";²⁴ the Middle English *Castle of Love* likewise explains that "wot no mon but God allone / What is the betokenyng / Of the loude cry and geiyng / Thet heo wolleth with loude stevyn / Gevyn and crye up to hevyn"

21. Frederick Furnivall, ed., *Adam Davy's Five Dreams about Edward III*, EETS o. s. 69 (London: N. Trübner, 1878), 92.

22. From Cambridge Univ. Ff.2.38 in Hermann Varnhagen, "Zu mittelenglischen Gedichten. X: Zu den 'Singa ante Iudicium,'" *Anglia* 3 (1880): 533–51.

23. For Aquinas on indirect duties to animals, see my discussions in chapters 1 and 3; for Kant, see his *Lectures on Ethics*, excerpted in Linzey and Clarke, *Animal Rights*, 126–27, where Kant writes, for example, "so far as animals are concerned, we have no direct duties. Animals are not self-conscious and are there merely as a means to an end. That end is man."

24. Trans. Heist, *Fifteen Signs*, 81.

(no man but God alone knows what the loud crying and grieving means that they wail with loud voices and cry up to heaven);²⁵ and John Lydgate's *Fiftene Toknys Afor the Doom* says, "The thridde day herd on mount and pleyn, / Foul, beeste and fyssh, shal tremble in certeyn, / Compleynyng in ther hydous moone / Vp the skyes; this noyse nat maad in veyn, / For what they mene, God shal knowe alloone" (the third day, herds on mountains and plains, fowls, beasts, and fish, shall tremble, complaining with a hideous moan up to the skies; this noise will not be made in vain, as what they mean, God alone shall know; 12–16).²⁶ Lydgate's characterization of the "this noyse" as "nat maad in veyn" seems disingenuous or incorrect, even within the immediate context of the poem itself. In the final stanza, Lydgate declares that "all bodyes shal that day aryse" (all bodies shall rise up that day; 84); this is demonstrably untrue: only human bodies rise, and the rest God destroys. In what way could the animals have cried out "nat . . . in veyn," if Lydgate has excluded animals from those creatures possessing, to recall Judith Butler, "grievable lives," or if God hears animal cries and still destroys them?²⁷ But the animals will not have cried out in vain, if we attend

25. Carl Horstmann, ed., *The Minor Poems of the Vernon MS*, EETS o. s. 98 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1892), 403.

26. Lydgate, *Minor Poems*, 118. For further examples, see, among others, Peter Damian, *The Last Days and Antichrist*, "The sign of the fourth day: all the monsters and all things that live in the water of the sea will be gathered together upon the sea, roaring and bellowing back and forth as though in contest; and men will not know what they are singing or what they are thinking [quid cantent vel quid cogitent], but only God will know, by whom all live, that His purpose may be fulfilled" (trans. Heist, *Fifteen Signs*, 28); Morris, *Pricke of Conscience*, "þe fieth day, sal swilk a wonder be, / þe mast wondreful fisshes of þe se / Sal com to-gyder and mak swilk romyng / þat it sal be hydus til mans heryng. / Bot what þat romieng sal signify, / Na man may whit, bot God almyghty (4770–75); and, notable for its Noah's ark-like enumeration of kinds of animals, "Les Quinze Signes," edited in Robert Fawtier and Ethel C. Fawtier-Jones, "Notice de Manuscrit French 6 de la John Rylands Library, Manchester," *Romania* 49 (1923): 340–42, "De totes bestes qui sunt suz le firmament, / Urs, leuns, leparz, dragun et serpent, / Dromedarie, olifant erent a Deu present, / E tuit li oisel del secle i erent ensemment, / Sur la mer frunt un grant assemblement, / Crierunt et braerunt mult angoissusement. / Qui adunc ert vif mult avera grant turment, / Lur langages ert tels nul n'entendra nent / Hom qui seit el secle fors Deu a qui tut apent."

27. Note that a few examples refuse the animals the ability to speak: e.g., Aebischer, *Le Mystère d'Adam*, where "trestotes les mues bestes / Vers le ciel torneront lor testes. / A Deu voldront merci crier. / Més eles ne porront parler" (all the mute beasts turn their heads to heaven. They want to cry out to God, but they cannot speak; 1099–1102); and a Middle English example in Cambridge Univ. Ff.2.38 (edited in Varnhagen, "*Singa ante Judicium*"), which, after emphasizing that fish exist only to be consumed by humans, observes that "The bestys, þat of speche be dombe, / Upward schall ther hedys tombe, / And calle to god on ther wyse, / So sore þen schall þem agryse, / And wolden crye, yf they couthe, / Yf they myght speke with mouthe" (141–46). In a fifteenth-century preacher's manual, all things, including animals, cry out in human language, and are therefore understandable to God and humans alike: "all þynge schall speke þan, / And cry in erthe aftyr þe steuyn off man, / And be-mone

to the incomprehensibility of animal speech, not as a lacuna in the tradition's explanatory capability, but rather as a gap deliberately left open, a space that has not been stuffed with human meaning. The noisy animals appear in texts written by humans, for humans, in a genre about the end of the world that is primarily a genre about the preliminaries to a specifically human future. Yet the genre represents animals while simultaneously representing the inability of any human representation or understanding to represent animals *completely*. The representation of the ultimate unfathomability of animals to human understanding breaks sharply with the anthropocentrism of so many medieval intellectual engagements with animals, in which animals often appear for humans as interpretable signs: paradigmatically, in the bestiaires, or in Hexameral commentaries, encyclopedias, or heraldry. In this case, animals appear while simultaneously thwarting the signifying utility humans might seek to derive from them. As I pointed out in chapter 1, medieval linguistic theory considered animal voices to be nonlinguistic: the human voice produces discrete sounds, but the animal produces only confused noise; while human language can be written down, animal noise cannot; the woofing and braying of brutes conveys no meaning except as a reminder to humans of their unique possession of language. The noise of animals in the Last Days contravenes these schema: it is incomprehensible to humans, unscriptable by any hand, but also, at the same time, linguistic, as God understands it as language. It is not mere noise, then, but rather, at least for humans, a foreign tongue. Just before the termination of animal existence, just before humans escape from the world and their reliance on animals for their human selfhood, the animals themselves exclude humans by asserting their possession of selves unavailable to human uses or understanding.

In part, the incomprehensibility of animals' language to humans testifies to the fundamental incomprehensibility of another's suffering. Elaine Scarry remarks that "pain enters into our midst as at once something that cannot be denied and that cannot be confirmed. . . . To have pain is to have *certainty*; to hear about pain is to have *doubt*."²⁸ The subjective core of one's suffering can be observed or measured only incompletely by others; suffering can be felt and experienced in its fullest sense only by who—or what—feels it. Those outside the sufferer doubt it. This doubt may lead to one certainty, that of the

hem self in owr sy3th / Ryth as þey speke myth" (102–5); See the *Quindecim Signa ante diem Iudicii* in Frederick Furnivall, ed., *Hymns to the Virgin and Christ, The Parliament of Devils, and other Religious Poetry*, EETS o. s. 24 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1867).

28. Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 13; original emphasis.

Cartesian vivisectionist who comes to believe that a dog's cries are only the cries of a breaking machine, but it may lead to another, the realization that a subject's suffering is accessible to others only through an act of imagination, and that therefore the subject possesses an ineluctable something unknowable to others. In the Fifteen Signs tradition, animals cry out, suffering, but no one can know fully what the animals feel but themselves and God: to quote Lydgate again, "what they mene, God shal knowe alloone" (16). By foregrounding the fundamental incompleteness of the human imaginative act of witnessing animal suffering, the Fifteen Signs tradition reserves something to the animal that is inaccessible to humans, namely an animal consciousness belonging exclusively to the animal itself. Precisely because of its incompleteness, the record of the woeful cries of animals in the Fifteen Signs tradition thus acknowledges, to recall Tom Regan's animal rights formulation, that animals can be subjects of their own lives,²⁹ while also exceeding the capacities of any rights-based formulation, by attesting that animals have a subjecthood inaccessible to comprehension.³⁰

This is not, however, a subjecthood saved by being finally delivered to God. God hears them, understands them, and still destroys them. For better or worse, the animals are not bound to the economy of salvation. One Middle English example prays:

I þonke þe, lord, of þy good dede.
 For y wot, þou art rythwyse,
 Thow wolte not lese þy marchandyse,
 But brynge me, lorde, unto þat stede,
 The whych þou bowztest me wyth þy dede.³¹ (50–54)

I thank you, Lord, for your good deed. For I know that you are righteous.

29. Tom Regan, *Animal Rights, Human Wrongs: An Introduction to Moral Philosophy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 93, "subjects-of-a-life are the experiencing center of their lives, individuals who have lives that fare experientially better or worse for themselves, logically independently of whether they are valued by others."

30. For critiques of the rights model as it pertains to animals, see, for example, Wolfe, *Animal Rites*, 53; Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism*, 73–78 (where he paraphrases work by Cora Diamond); and Deborah Slicer, "Your Daughter or Your Dog? A Feminist Assessment of the Animal Research Issue," in Donovan and Adams, *Feminist Care Tradition*, 108–24, at 108–10; and several other essays in this collection, such as Thomas G. Keitch, "The Role of the Rational and the Emotive in a Theory of Animal Rights," 259–300, which at 261–77 systematically considers various arguments for animal rights and for what constitutes a "right"; in this volume, see particularly Carol Adams, "Caring About Suffering," 212, "Instead of saying, 'animals' suffering is like humans,' relying on metaphors, why not say animal suffering in their body is theirs?"

31. Cotton Caligula A. II, 89, edited in Varnhagen, "*Singa ante Judicium*."

You will not lose your merchandise, but you will bring me, Lord, into that place that you bought for me with your deed.

Here, humans are aware of themselves as commodities, purchased by divine suffering, inscribed in a celestial register: their actions and desires are elements in a transaction between the divine and the worldly. But animal lives and deeds are not calculable; nothing they do can increase or diminish divine punishment or reward in God's economy, nor can they be the subject of "ryth" (mercy), the divine capacity that infinitely exceeds all calculation. The incomprehensibility of animal voices and the inability of animals to be saved or punished at once renders animals completely vulnerable to destruction and protects their particularity from being assimilated to either human or divine needs. In this sense, animals have their own existence more than humans do, for in the last days neither animals nor their deeds can be exchanged for anything. Nonsubstitutable, freed or fired from servitude, animals cry out for or from the excess of their being, for what is, in the best sense, *useless*.³² In the animals' cries humans can perceive mere being demonstrating the presence of what anthropocentrism presumed it to lack: its own voice, its own sadness, rage, and death, when it can no longer be assimilated to either human need or divine justice. They cry out in voices that they should have been recognized as possessing all along.

They cry out for and with the world: their voice numbers among the voices of beings, not merely the voices of lives. The animals mourn along with the stars, the sea, the rocks, all that will be destroyed, all that will not be translated—or, to put it in modern language—*uploaded* into an eternity freed of the material limitations of worldly existence. In the example in the *Mystère d'Adam*, "E de toz les fluves parleront / E voiz d'ome parler averont" (and all the rivers will speak and they will have the voices of men to speak; 1150), and in another, "Every watyr shall crye þan, / Speke and have steven of man" (every water shall cry then and speak and have a human voice; 182).³³ In its systematic attention to what makes up a world—to the stones, rivers, waters, trees, birds, beasts, and fish, each of which cries out and trembles in the last days—the Fifteen Signs tradition can be understood as recalling a world in all its plenitude at the very moment humans hope to

32. I am echoing a key maxim of deep ecology: "the well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life [for "life" read "existence"] on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent worth). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes"; George Sessions, *Deep Ecology for the Twenty-First Century* (Boston: Shambhala, 1995), 68, quoted in Greg Garrard, *Ecocriticism* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 21.

33. Cotton Caligula A. II, edited in Varnhagen, "Singa ante Judicium."

realize, at long last, secure identities by sealing themselves off from their involvement in it. Against this hope, the tradition witnesses that what matters is not only human, and that humans should understand that existence is not existence unless intermeshed inseparably and precariously in a world. Understood this way, the voices of the Fifteen Signs tradition impart not scorn, but regret and longing for what humans, believing themselves separate and immutable, will abandon for the empyrean sterility of the resurrection fantasy.³⁴

II.

The Peasant's Oxen and Other Worldly Animals

To be taught well by the Fifteen Signs tradition means to be taught to abandon the violent, vain human system to which, in this book, I have almost exclusively devoted my attention. It requires moving toward a less “paranoid,” more “reparative” reading practice, one less committed to always, invariably revealing secret anxieties. For revelation may not be the best goal. After all, as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick wonders, “What is the basis for assuming that it will surprise or disturb—never mind motivate—anyone to learn that a given social manifestation is artificial, self-contradictory, imitative, phantasmatic, or even violent?”³⁵ The question might be, then, what comes after revelation? Cary Wolfe reminds us that a posthumanism worthy of the name will not mean “the triumphal surpassing or unmasking of something but an increase in the vigilance, responsibility, and humanity that accompany living in a world so newly, and differently inhabited.”³⁶ A worthy posthumanism requires allying with a poem such as “De mortibus

34. “Fantasy” here alludes to Butler, *Frames of War*, 25, “Lives are by definition precarious: they can be expunged at will or by accident; their persistence is in no sense guaranteed. In some sense, this is a feature of all life, and there is no thinking of life that is not precarious—except, of course, in fantasy, and in military fantasies in particular.” I also recall Jeffrey Cohen’s reading of *Sir Gawain in the Green Knight* in “Inventing with Animals in the Middle Ages,” Hanawalt and Kiser, *Engaging with Nature*, 57, “The romance creates a space where embodiment is multiple and interspecies. Sir Gawain glides through a world alive with flora and fauna, all with their own agency, a world where the knight can never be *mon al hym one*.”

35. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, “Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading; or, You’re So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Introduction Is About You,” in *Novel Gazing: Queer Readings in Fiction*, ed. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 19.

36. Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism*, 47.

bovum" (On the Deaths of Cows), written by Paulinus of Nola's friend Endecheius, whose attention to the animal grief can hardly be accounted for by appeal to the violence of the human:

Over there is a calf that just now
 Was leaping and frolicking around,
 Going to suckle his mother; but soon he sucks
 The plague from the diseased udder.
 When his mother, wounded by this sorrowful pain,
 Saw her calf closing his eyes in death,
 She moored repeatedly, groaning pitifully
 And collapsed, longing for death.
 Then as if she feared that thirst with parched throat
 Might choke the calf, while she lay there dying too,
 She moved her udder to her calf that was already dead.
 Love remains strong even after death.³⁷ (69–80)

But increased vigilance before animal suffering may not be the best goal, either. My book's hoped-for effects might not be, or not only be, solemnity, nor the recognition that any decision in favor of any given human or animal

37. Carolinne White, trans., *Early Christian Latin Poets* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 73. His source for this scene might be the scene of a cow's mad grief for her sacrificed calf in Lucretius, *De natura rerum*, in Lucretius: *On the Nature of the Universe*, trans. Ronald Melville (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), "the mother wandering through the leafy glens / bereaved seeks on the ground the cloven footprints. / With questing eyes she seeks if anywhere / Her lost child may be seen; she stands, and fills with moaning the woodland glades" (II.355–58). Cf. Geoffrey of Burton, *St. Modwenna*, 21, where a wolf snatches a calf, "while the cow expressed her grief as best she could by mooing." For Endecheius's and Paulinus's varying responses to late antique cultures of animal sacrifice, see Dennis E. Trout, "Christianizing the Nolan Countryside: Animal Sacrifice at the Tomb of St. Felix," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3 (1995): 281–98. Another Christian work, nearly contemporary with Endecheius, likewise counters the legitimacy of animal sacrifice to the pagan gods, in this case, by giving the sacrifice a voice: Arnobius of Sicca, *The Case Against the Pagans*, trans. George Englert McCracken (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1949), VII.9, 487–89, begins by imagining an oxen protesting its guiltless death. Though Arnobius upholds human supremacy by tending to characterize the oxen as irrational and therefore irresponsible, he nonetheless gives the oxen this argument: humans "are possessed of reason and use articulate speech. But how do they know whether I, too, do not do what I do by a reasoning of my own and whether the sound which I utter is not my own method of language and one understood by us alone?" His source for this argument is likely *The Skeptic Way: Sextus Empiricus's Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, trans. Benson Mates (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), I.14, 98–99, "Even if we do not understand the utterances of so-called 'non-rational' animals, it is not at all improbable that they are conversing although we do not understand. For when we hear the talk of barbarians we do not understand that either, and it seems to us undifferentiated sound."

sacrifices and betrays all other obligations “to the others whom I know or don’t know, the billions of my fellows (without mentioning the animals that are even more other others than my fellows),”³⁸ a recognition that at once results in increased vigilance and the off-kilter self-satisfaction of knowing the impossibility of a good conscience.³⁹ This is indeed worth something, but it may not be sufficient: for a worthy posthumanism must recognize both pathos and play:

The question of suffering led Derrida to the virtue of pity, and that is not a small thing. But how much more promise is in the questions, Can animals play? Or work? And even, can I learn to play with *this* cat? Can I, the philosopher, respond to an invitation or recognize one when it is offered?⁴⁰

A story by Paulinus of Nola suggests the form such play might take. Paulinus’s sixth *natalicium*, a poem written for Saint Felix’s feast day in 400, tells of a peasant who made a living by renting out his two oxen, which were dearer to him than his own children: “Neque cura minor saturare juven-
cos, / Quam dulces natos educere; parciior immo / Natis, quam pecori caro” (he devoted no less care to giving his oxen their fill than to bringing up his sweet sons. In fact, he fed his children more sparingly than the dear cattle; *PL* 61: 495D).⁴¹ But the oxen were stolen. After a long and fruitless search, the peasant returned home to grieve; finally he prayed, first to God, and then at the shrine of Felix. He waited at Felix’s shrine until he was driven off, then went home in the dark to lay inconsolably in the filth of the oxen’s empty stall, caressing their hoofprints. Amused by the intensity of the peasant’s complaints, Felix returned the oxen, and when they pounded on the door, the peasant imagined the robbers had returned, until the oxen identified themselves by lowing. As soon as the peasant began to unbolt the door, “juncti simul irrupere juveni, / Et reserantis adhuc molimina prae-
venerunt / Dimoto faciles cesserunt obice postes, / Oblatumque sibi mox ipso in limine regem ” (the oxen burst in together, anticipating his attempt to open the door, for once the bolts were released the door easily gave way; *PL* 61:499D–500A). The oxen and peasant embraced one another:

38. Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, trans. David Wills (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 68.

39. For this point, see Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism*, 96.

40. Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 22.

41. This and all subsequent translations of Paulinus are from Paulinus of Nola, *Poems*, 129.

Dum complectentis domini juga cara benignum
 Molliter obnixa blanda vice pectus adulant
 Illum dilecti pecoris nec cornua laedunt,
 Et collata quasi molles ad pectora frontes
 Admovet, et manibus non aspera lingua videtur,
 Quae lambens etiam silvestria pabula radit. (*PL* 61:500A–B)

they gently nuzzled their kindly lord and fawningly caressed his breast in turn. The horns of his beloved cattle did him no injury; he drew their heads as though they were soft to his proffered breast. To his hands the tongues which by licking could scrape their food even from trees did not feel rough.

This story is one of Paulinus's animal miracles, but, unusually for Paulinus, the oxen do not end up sacrificed to Felix; they are saved for human love rather than only for human use. To be sure, the oxen's love of the peasant may attest to perfect animal servility, as the peasant will presumably loan them out again. But the peasant's sacrifice of himself and his family to the well-being of the oxen, as well as his shock and vulnerability at their loss and return, perhaps overflow the confines of simple utility, eroding the borders of both human and animal.

The dissolution of these categories may be well considered via Derrida's lecture notes for the session that opened his course on "Hostipitalité," or, as Gil Anidjar straightforwardly translates the word, "hostipitality." As elsewhere in his oeuvre, Derrida forms a neologism that expresses his argument in miniature. "Hostipitality" incorporates the double meaning of the French "hôte," which means both "guest" and "host." As Derrida argues, a host who welcomes a guest in a limited sense—for a limited time, with a limited set of accommodations, and for a guest whose character, desires, and needs are already known in advance—has not been truly hospitable, because the host has measured the hospitality. A truly welcoming host must offer hospitality without limits, which requires that the host be overcome by an unexpected guest with unexpected wants. Thus the true host is unable to welcome, because to welcome means to decide when and how far to open the door. Nor can the true host know the character of the guest in advance, because this, too, reserves to the host the option of denying hospitality. By welcoming, the host risks being caught up entirely by the demands of the guest, even becoming hostage to the guest: hence the ethical and logical affinity of the opposing meanings of "hôte." Hence too the presence of the Latin root "hostis," meaning both "stranger" and "enemy": the arrival of the

guest “ruptures, bursts in or breaks in”⁴² upon the host, shattering the host’s sense of home, boundaries, and, ultimately, self, since the true host reserves nothing to itself. The oxen, too, burst in, “irrupere,” themselves determining when and how wide to open the door, stripping from the peasant, almost as soon as he makes the gesture, his capacity to welcome. Through a generosity that exceeds his ability to give, the peasant becomes hostage to his own guests. Furthermore, as Paulinus makes clear, the oxen are not entirely assimilated to the peasant’s bucolic domesticity: they caress the peasant, though they *could* also have injured him with their bulk, horns, and rough tongues. Faced with creatures of such strength, however, the peasant does not hold himself back, but gives himself over to them entirely, without guarding himself from any injury they might do him. Now a perfect host, hostage to his guests, and beyond all capacity to give, and thus beyond all capacity to be a host, the peasant abandons himself to vulnerability before the oxen. To recall the *Dialogue of St. Julien*, discussed in chapter 3, “Ou porreit l’en cest homme querre?” (where could one seek the man in here?). There is violence in this encounter: “complectentis” encompasses in its meanings not only “embrace,” but “entwine,” “encircle,” “seize,” “seize upon,” and “to take possession of.” But this is neither the violence of human domination, nor the violence of animal’s claim of lawmaking violence for itself, like that of the boar of the *Avowyng*. This is the violence of the unexpected arrival that shatters all self-certainty, that destroys the objective conditions of the status quo, that evacuates the foundations where a human might stand or where a human might force an animal to stand before it.

So too in Folcuin of St. Bertin’s portion of the *Deeds of the Abbots of Saint Bertin*, in the story of the horse of a ninth-century bishop of Thérouanne, also named Folcuin. The horse loved Folcuin so much that “ante eius feretrum preisse”⁴³ (it went before his bier) at its master’s funeral pro-

42. “Hostipitality,” in Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, 364. For a review of several decades of Derrida’s writing on hospitality, see Mark W. Westmoreland, “Interruptions: Derrida and Hospitality,” *Kritike* 2 (2008): 1–10. Willy Evenepoel, “Saint Paulin de Nole, Carm. 18, 211–468: Hagiographie et Humour,” in *La narrativa Cristiana antica: codici narrativi, strutture formali, schemi retorici: XXIII incontro di studiosi dell’antichità Cristiana* (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1995), 507–20, characterizes Paulinus’s depiction of the peasant’s grief as snobbish mockery. The peasant’s intensity of feeling may, however, suggest his refusal to be embarrassed by his desire for his oxen, and thus his suspension of human dignity.

43. O. Holder-Egger, ed., “Gesta abbatum S. Bertini Sithiensium,” in Georg Waitz, ed., *MGH SS* 13 (Hanover, 1881), 619, for this and subsequent quotations from the story. For directing me to it, I thank Rob Meens, “Eating Animals in the Early Middle Ages: Classifying the Animal World and Building Group Identities,” in Creager and Jordan, *The Animal-Human Boundary*, 7.

cession, and “omnem deinceps hominem ferre recusasse, nec passus est post menbra tanti pontificis voluptatibus deservire alicuius hominis” (afterwards it refused to carry all men, nor, because of its great delight in the bishop, would it suffer the limb of any other man). It would be simplistic to identify the relationship between horse and bishop as just another instance of animal subjugation, as the horse serves and loves only the bishop, not humans in general, and once the bishop dies, it refuses to be mastered. Despite its refusal, however, the horse escapes both the punishment due to any other recalcitrant beast and even the historian’s condemnation. In escaping this condemnation, as in escaping general human domination, the horse escapes the system of subjugation that differentially produces human and animal. After the horse’s death, the humans attempt to feed its body to the dogs. This was no doubt the usual method of disposing of dead horses. But disposing of—rather than memorializing—the carcass also reasserts that the horse was only an animal, that its remains, being a carcass rather than corpse, merit only instrumental, not reverential, treatment. The horse nonetheless escapes even this last effort at humiliation:

Et merito cadaver eius canes non poterant lacerare, super quem ymnidica cantica Christo decantata erant sepissime. Quod videntes cives, eum humano more sepelierunt, quem nec bestiae nec volucres tangere presumserunt.

Because of the merit of its corpse upon which hymns to Christ were so often chanted, the dogs could not mangle it. When the citizens saw this, they gave a human burial to what neither beasts nor birds [or “flying things,” viz., birds *and* insects] had presumed to touch.

The honor the horse receives may derive only from the sanctity of Folcuin and the hymns he sang while riding; it may derive only from the logic of the pet, which protects the horse while excluding all other animals, “bestiae et volucres,” which, implicitly, will never be buried “humano more.” The story may be understood even as a historical curiosity, since Théroouanne is in a region where horse burial was once not uncommon.⁴⁴ Folcuin does not, however, conclude the story with a pronouncement on God’s might, or on the sanctity of his namesake, or with a condemnation of the vestigial

44. Sébastien Lepetz, “Sacrifices et inhumations de chevaux et de chiens en France du nord au IIIe siècle après J.-C.,” in *Ces animaux que l’homme choisit d’inhumér: Contribution à l’étude de la place et du rôle de l’animal dans les rites funéraires: Journée d’étude Université Liège, 20 mars 1999*, ed. Liliane Bodson (Liege: Liege University Press, 2000), 93–125.

relics of an equine cult. He leaves it open. If we too leave the story open, unsystematized, we might observe that Folcuin refrains from either humanizing or animalizing the horse. He does not speak of human love for the horse; he makes no claims for the horse's rationality; nor does he claim that the horse will be resurrected into immortal life. Although the horse is buried "humano more," it is not presented as if it were, in some fundamental sense, human, or as if it were privileged to be protected because of human love for it, but neither is it presented as an animal. Nor does the horse's death affect it alone: all creatures about it have perhaps undergone—as Judith Butler characterizes the possibilities of mourning—"a transformation . . . the full result of which one cannot know in advance."⁴⁵ It is the behavior of the dogs and birds that inspires the humans to bury and memorialize the horse, to welcome the body of the horse as a guest, as it were, letting themselves be taken over by hospitality for it. When humans allow themselves to be instructed by the *cultural behavior* of animals, when readers of Folcuin's account allow its wonder to remain open, as it is in this burial ritual, they might witness the horse as a face, in the Lévinasian sense, "the visible of the invisible" witnessing to the inexhaustibility of a being that cannot be used up in any singular identity, or category, whose very inexhaustibility demands that we abandon ourselves in care of it.⁴⁶

I finish my examples with the Middle English romance *Sir Gowther*. It tells the story of a half-human, half-demon knight driven by his infernal heritage to rape and immolate nuns, force friars off crags, and hang parsons from hooks. When he discovers his demonic paternity, Gowther immediately seeks out the Pope, who prescribes a humiliating penance: Gowther must eat only food that he "revus of howndus mothe" (snatches from a hound's mouth; 296). Nothing in this penance threatens the distinction between humans and animals, for it is because the Pope and Gowther alike think animals are degraded that the penance works *as* penance. As he suffers this humiliation, he learns not to reject but rather to properly reorient his violence: when he is not greedily tearing bones from dogs (355–56), he acts like a good Christian knight by spattering the blood and brains of a Saracen

45. Butler, *Precarious Life*, 21.

46. For the "visible of the invisible," see David Morris, "Faces and the Invisible of the Visible: Toward an Animal Ontology," in Guenther and Taylor, *PhaenEx* 2, 124–69, at 137. For a recent clear discussion of the "face," see Butler, *Precarious Life*, particularly 137–38, and, with the necessary corrections, 144, "the human is not identified with what is represented but neither is it identified with the unrepresentable; it is, rather, that which limits the success of any representational practice. The face is not 'effaced' in this failure of representation, but is constituted in that very possibility." For Lévinas on the face, see, for example, Emmanuel Lévinas, *Humanism of the Other*, trans. Nidra Poller (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 30–33.

army (429–30). At the end of the romance, having learned to be a good and holy human, he dies as a saint. Yet after Gowther speaks with the Pope, on the way to his penance, a dog *gives* Gowther food as a gift:

He went owt of that ceté
 Into anodur far cuntré,
 Tho testamentys thus thei sey;
 He seyt hym down undur a hyll,
 A greyhownde broght hym meyt untyll
 Or evon yche a dey.
 Thre neythtys ther he ley:
 Tho grwhownd ylke a dey
 A whyte lofe he hym broghht;
 On tho fort day come hym non,
 Up he start and forthe con gon,
 And lovyd God in his thoght.⁴⁷ (307–18)

He went out from that city and into another far country, as the records say; he sat down at the base of a hill, and a greyhound brought him food every day. Three nights he lay there: and the greyhound each day brought him a white loaf of bread, and on the fourth day did not come to him. Gowther got up and went forth and loved God.

In a romance of such shocking violence, this is a moment of astonishing tenderness. Below the hill, Gowther lives outdoors, outside all civilized organization of space; for three days, he receives a dog's charity, not snatching it, but accepting what the dog offers. In this hillside idyll, between the violences of demonic and divine *teloi*, Gowther inhabits with the dog a space that interrupts economy, for, in the sense Derrida gave the word, this bread is a gift:

But is not the gift, if there is any, also that which interrupts economy? That which, in suspending economic calculation, no longer gives rise to exchange? That which opens the circle so as to defy reciprocity or symmetry, the common measure, and so as to turn aside the return in view of the no-return?⁴⁸

47. Laskaya and Salisbury, *Middle English Breton Lays*.

48. Jacques Derrida, *Given Time. I, Counterfeit Money*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 7.

Unlike Saint Roch, similarly fed by a dog, Gowther can offer nothing in return, nor do we see that the dog expects anything. There is no blessing, no approval, no protection, nothing he can give in return that would transform his reception of bread into a node in an exchange, equal or otherwise. Nor, indeed, because this is *not* the humiliating penance the Pope commanded, does Gowther get anything, apart from the bread itself, from giving himself over to the dog's generosity. He does not begin his renewal until he turns to Christian penitential violence. Here, with the dog, Gowther inhabits a space conditioned neither by violence nor by a structure of superiority and abasement. The dog is never identified, never explained, and Gowther, encountering it, allows himself to receive without asking, without ever behaving as if he were quite human or the dog were quite canine. Wondering at this encounter between Gowther and the greyhound, taught by Folcuin's horse, receiving the oxen, with Paulinus's peasant, in a welcoming beyond all welcoming, humans might abandon themselves to relationships unavailable to mere animals or, for that matter, to mere humans, whether medieval or modern.

Medieval literature preserves many other such encounters and creatures, unrecognizable as participants in narratives of human superiority and animal degradation: the hermaphroditic, accusatory stag of Marie de France's "Guigemar"; the piscine knights and loving, jilted monkey of *Perceforest*; the complaining, polyglot raven messenger of the *Munich Oswald*; the animals of the second Biblical creation story, not slaves or objects, but helpers, and, in some commentaries, experimental sexual partners; or the very many stories of saintly sympathy for animals compiled by Helen Waddell and David Bell, not all of which can or should be explained as saints enjoying Edenic domination over an unresistant natural world.⁴⁹ These narratives could be accommodated by a Procrustean framework of anxiety, violence, and death, but they are better recognized in their wonderful hybridity as refusing any closed human system or better as entirely indifferent to the human system. They might therefore be understood as intermixing elements to form something unrecognizable, even as a violation, to any human system. But we can go still further by not recognizing these forms as mixtures at all. We should recognize them as forces in motion, provisional bodies, whose effects can-

49. Marie de France, *Die Lais der Marie de France*, ed. Karl Warnke, 3rd ed. (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1925), "Guigemar," lines 80–122; Sylvia Huot, *Postcolonial Fictions in the Roman de Perceforest: Cultural Identities and Hybridities* (Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), 59–66; J. W. Thomas, trans., *The Strassburg Alexander and the Munich Oswald* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1989); Eric Lawee, "The Reception of Rashi's Commentary on the Torah in Spain: The Case of Adam's Mating with the Animals," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 97 (2007): 33–66; Bell, *Wholly Animals*; and Waddell, *Beasts and Saints*.

not be understood by reference to any “hybridized” and therefore “violated” pure form whose idealized existence is always, at any rate, secondary.⁵⁰ We would require something, then, like Deleuze and Guattari’s antifoundationalist conception of “becoming-animal.” *A Thousand Plateaus* engages with a world comprising not subjects but “events, in assemblages that are inseparable from an hour, a season, an atmosphere, an air, a life.”⁵¹ Its paradigmatic example is the “deterritorialization” of a wasp pollinating an orchid, in which the wasp “becomes a liberated piece of the orchid’s reproductive system” and the orchid “becomes the object of an orgasm in the wasp, also liberated from its own reproduction.”⁵² In this symbiosis, it is no longer possible to speak of the singular wasp or orchid; it is necessary to speak—to use Deleuze and Guattari’s terminology—of the becoming-orchid of the wasp and the becoming-wasp of the orchid, of the breakdown of singular and separate “molar” beings into the “molecular” becomings of an assemblage.

Like Elmer and Wolfe, Deleuze and Guattari are impatient with love for pets, since pets “invite us to regress, draw us into a narcissistic contemplation . . . anyone who likes cats or dogs is a fool.”⁵³ This is too much for Donna Haraway. While her characterization of humans and other animals interacting in a “flow of entangled meaningful bodies in time” in which “each partner [is] more than one but less than two” clearly affiliates with Deleuze and Guattari, Haraway excoriates Deleuze and Guattari for their misogynist disdain for the lapdogs of old women and for their contempt for the mundane.⁵⁴ As Haraway argues, “caninophilic narcissism,”⁵⁵ that is, considering dogs as sources of unconditional love for humans, is not the only way for humans and domestic animals to interact considerately; nor does escaping this narcissism necessitate the romantic, undomesticated frenzies to which Deleuze and Guattari abandon themselves;⁵⁶ as Haraway asserts, or, it should be said, *experiences*, “co-habiting does not mean,” or

50. I draw my critique of “hybridity” from Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, 78–79.

51. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 262.

52. *Ibid.*, 293.

53. *Ibid.*, 240; original emphasis.

54. For “meaningful bodies in time” and “more than one,” see Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 26 and 244; for her critique of Deleuze and Guattari, see *ibid.* 27–30 and 314–15 nn37–39.

55. Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm, 2003), 33.

56. For example, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 250, where Deleuze and Guattari praise the alliance between man and Devil in Dumas’ wolfman story *Meneur de Loups*, whose “alogical consistencies” and “symbiosis” they contrast to the predictability of the human relationship with “the Oedipal family animal, a mere poodle.”

at least does not necessarily mean, “fuzzy and touchy-feely.”⁵⁷ It can mean recognizing a “naturalcultural practice that red[oes] us molecule by molecule,” including, as in her paradigmatic example, a training with a dog that allows “something unexpected, something new and free, something outside the rules of function and calculation, something not ruled by the logic of the reproduction of the same” to come into being.⁵⁸ If we sit under the hill with Gowther, to welcome and to be welcomed by the dog, in this mundane space, between the narratives of the demon tyrant and the pious crusader, we might realize that no welcoming is necessary; it is not necessary to dislodge ourselves from molar separateness; following the lesson of the Fifteen Signs, what is necessary is instead the *acknowledgment* that we are already symbiotically enmeshed with “animals, plants, microorganisms, mad particles, a whole galaxy,”⁵⁹ that we all are already always being redone molecule by molecule. Ralph Acampora’s *Corporeal Compassion* describes the phenomenological notion of *sympphysis*, in which we recall that we share a world with other beings by being *bodied*—notably, not *embodied*, not minds in bodies. As he writes, “cultivating a bodiment ethos of interanimality is not a matter of mentally working one’s way into other selves or worlds by quasi-telepathic imagination, but is rather about becoming sensitive to an already constituted ‘inter-zone’ of somaesthetic conviviality.”⁶⁰ As he argues, it is not this being-with that needs justification; rather the rationalist “movement toward dissociation and nonaffiliation needs to be justified against a background of relatedness and interconnectivity.”⁶¹ Gowther is *already* with the dog, indeed, already with the hill and all that is there, and we must do is to refuse to close them all off from each other, or, if we do, we might find other limits and think them anew. In this space, we might witness something other than subjugation, something other than just the love of pets.

We must also remember that there can be no relatedness, no wonder, no cherishing of another without some difference; therefore, this is *not* an extension of “human rights” to animals, nor is it a flattening out of all difference into a kind of cosmic sludge. Susan Crane provides one model for a nonanthropocentric being with other life in her consideration of the interspecies kindness between Canacee and the falcon in Chaucer’s *Squire’s Tale*. As she reads the scene, this moment is one in which love at once transcends and

57. Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 30.

58. *Ibid.*, 228 and 223.

59. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 250.

60. Ralph R. Acampora, *Corporeal Compassion: Animal Ethics and Philosophy of Body* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006), 84.

61. *Ibid.*, 5.

sustains difference, for Canacee treats the falcon as an ethically significant subject without humanizing it; this is a sympathy that does not collapse into anthropocentric self-love.⁶² It is a sympathy, as well, that remembers that Canacee can act for the falcon. This interaction might be understood through Leonard Lawlor's argument for the necessity of at once "welcom[ing] and yet guard[ing] the alterity of others,"⁶³ an argument that could recognize that Canacee, because she is human, has certain responsibilities apart from simply nonassimilative kindness to a falcon, and apart from recognizing the co-constitutive presence of herself and falcon in the constantly shifting world. Humans must be hosts and guests to other animals, for they always already are; at the same time, human strength cannot be denied: because of the extraordinary destructive capacity of humans, they must protect others.⁶⁴ To echo the title of Lawlor's recent book, it is therefore not sufficient for humans simply to allow themselves to be with other animals, intermingled in the world; it is not sufficient to "train" with them, nor to recall their radical alterity. Lawlor proposes a philosophical orientation for protecting other animals, one that gives them proper, "nonuniversal name[s]," without definite articles.⁶⁵ Such names, being nonuniversal, would not mark them as just another instance of a universal category such as "the animal" or even "the dog." A proper name, so used, protects an animal—or, it might be said, a habitat—by distinguishing it individually from the world as a whole. But although "a name is a kind of shield that allows animals to be left alone,"⁶⁶ to the extent that it packages the life it marks for human understanding, it commits a kind of violence to the inexhaustibility and unknowability of animals, whether this be understood as a denial of their own "unfathomable X" or an "effacement" by thematization. Because this symbolic violence is unavoidable, to achieve a response to alterity "that is the least violent, the least evil, the least powerful,"⁶⁷ Lawlor proposes that such protecting names be given as though they were dates: humans can recognize a date without completely assimilating it to their limited knowledge, since a date has "unforeseeable

62. Susan Crane, "For the Birds," *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* 29 (2007): 21–41.

63. Leonard Lawlor, *This Is Not Sufficient: An Essay on Animality and Human Nature in Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 101.

64. See Cary Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism*, 95, "humans and animals may share a fundamental 'non-power at the heart of power' . . . but what they do not share equally is the power to materialize their misrecognition of their situation and to reproduce that materialization in institutions of exploitation and oppression whose effects are far from symmetrical in species terms."

65. Lawlor, *This Is Not Sufficient*, 105.

66. *Ibid.*, 110.

67. *Ibid.*, 72.

events” and past events that will never be known, which means “that a date never appears as such.”⁶⁸

To dislodge the arrogance of being human, where “human” means both an opposition to a homogeneously conceived “animal” and the automatic valuing of human over animal life, I seek a way of being with each other that could be enacted with an awareness of our shared vulnerability, the shared significance of all our deaths, our shared and mobile being together, and even our shared deliciousness. I seek a model that remembers that humans can never fully know what they are protecting when they protect other animals, or who they are when acting, or to what they are becoming vulnerable when they suspend the system of the human. A “postdisenchanted”⁶⁹ approach to the human and animal thus should recall the insights of Deleuze and Guattari, while still remembering “the very real torment of suffering individuals.”⁷⁰ Humans must *also* remember, with Haraway, that animals are not only passive victims that need to be rescued or let alone. They must remember that humans and other animals are at once vulnerable and world-shaping, passive and active, that humans are worldly creatures, shaping and shaped by other beings in the world, organic and nonorganic, living and nonliving—all categories that should be mobilized only strategically—all of which has transformative effects within co-constitutive, ever-shifting systems, but that none of this can be remembered properly without an unwavering critique of violence inherent in the system of the human.

I would like to think that this book has met the qualifications of what Foucault described the best modes of critique, which should be:

[G]enealogical in its design and archaeological in its method. Archaeological...in the sense that it will not seek to identify the universal structures of all knowledge or of all possible moral action, but will seek to treat the instances of discourse that articulate what we think, say, and do [and, I might say, *claim to be*] as so many historical events. And this critique will be genealogical in the sense that it will not deduce from the form of what we are what is impossible for us to do and to know; *but it will separate out,*

68. Ibid., 103.

69. I borrow this term from Carolyn Dinshaw, who used it in a roundtable discussion led and edited by Elizabeth Freeman, “Theorizing Queer Temporalities,” *GLQ* 13 (2007): 185.

70. I quote from the appraisal of Deleuze and Guattari in Elizabeth A. Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1994), 163, whose work in imagining a “psychical corporeality” (and whose cautious use of Deleuze and Guattari) I have found inspiring.

*from the contingency that has made us what we are, the possibility of no longer being, doing, or thinking what we are, do, or think.*⁷¹

What else might the human be? To begin to answer this question, and because I owe so much to Derrida's work on animals and ethics, I allow myself to leave off with his cat, which he insists is "a real cat, truly, believe me, a little cat. It isn't the figure of a cat. It doesn't silently enter the room as an allegory for all the cats on the earth."⁷² Derrida's insistence that his cat is this particular being removes or preserves it—her, rather, since she is *une chatte*—from the undifferentiated, humiliated mass of creatures shunted into animality. But doing so does not merely embrace the cat within Derrida's humanity. A cat, as Erica Fudge reminds us, is an unhomely creature; it is not caught up so easily.⁷³ This cat may be the very cat who captures our attention eighteen minutes into the film *Derrida* by staring out at us and meowing, while Derrida, at home, faxes someone his signature.⁷⁴ The cat is an animal making noise that should be heard as something more than noise, even if we cannot know precisely what she intends. We can simply be summoned by the meow to remember Derrida's love for and indeed his vulnerability and embarrassment, his openness, his being "seen seen" before her. Remembering symphysis, worlded and woundable with this cat, reshaped by it, we cease to imagine that the animal is our other, without, however, losing our wonder at her—or our—singularities, without losing our responsibility for her either. In this moment of hearing her, and of knowing that she, like us, cannot communicate all she thinks, in this moment when we acknowledge that we share a space, that we make a space by sharing it, that we are with each other without quite knowing what or where we are, perhaps we will have ceased to be only human, and will have ceased to wish for, and to defend, our human selves.

71. Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?," in Paul Rabinow, ed. *The Foucault Reader*, trans. Catherine Porter (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984): 46; my emphasis.

72. Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore*, 6.

73. Fudge, *Pets*, 79–81, and Erica Fudge, "The Dog, the Home, and the Human, and the Ancestry of Derrida's Cat," *The Oxford Literary Review* 29 (2007): 37–54.

74. Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering Kofman, *Derrida* (Eurozoom, 2002).

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Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Culture
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"In *How to Make a Human*, Karl Steel uses a series of beautifully articulated readings to argue that a foundational violence against animals that defines the human is pervasively at play in medieval texts. Medieval texts define the human through violence against animals, he argues: violence secures human mastery through the submission of the animal and identifies the human as grievable, in opposition to the animal that is not. Steel moves confidently among many different primary and secondary texts and traditions, and he writes about them with remarkable clarity. The research is inventive and extensive, the examples are varied and rich and often surprising, and the analysis is based on often brilliantly insightful close readings. This book is a pleasure to read."

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How to Make a Human: Animals and Violence in the Middle Ages tracks human attempts to cordon humans off from other life through a wide range of medieval texts and practices, including encyclopedias, dietary guides, resurrection doctrine, cannibal narrative, butchery law, boar-hunting, and teratology. Karl Steel argues that the human subjugation of animals played an essential role in the medieval concept of the human. In their works and habits, humans tried to distinguish themselves from other animals by claiming that humans alone among worldly creatures possess language, reason, culture, and, above all, an immortal soul and resurrectable body. Humans convinced themselves of this difference by observing that animals routinely suffer degradation at the hands of humans. Since the categories of human and animal were both a retroactive and relative effect of domination, no human could forgo his human privileges without abandoning himself.

Medieval arguments for both human particularity and the unique sanctity of human life have persisted into the modern age despite the insights of Darwin. *How to Make a Human* joins with other works in critical animal theory to unsettle human pretensions in the hopes of training humans to cease to project, and to defend, their human selves against other animals.

Karl Steel is assistant professor at Brooklyn College, City University of New York.

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